United Nations A/C.1/58/PV.19

General Assembly
Fifty-eighth session

Official Records

First Committee
19th meeting
Thursday, 30 October 20[illegible] m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Sareva (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda items 62 to 80 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: This morning the Committee, in accordance with its programme of work and timetable, will continue with the third phase of its work, namely, action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under agenda items 62 to 80.

Before proceeding with our work, I would like to urge all delegations that wish to sponsor any remaining draft resolutions to inform the Secretariat as quickly as possible before action is taken on those drafts. Delegations should not seek to become sponsor of any draft resolution once action has been taken on a specific draft resolution.

The Committee will continue today to take decisions on draft resolutions that appeared in formal working paper No. 4, which was circulated yesterday. Starting again with cluster 1, namely, nuclear weapons. After completing action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.53, contained in cluster 1, the Committee will proceed to take action on draft resolutions A/C.1/58/L.43, L.28 and L.16/Rev.1, contained in clusters 4, 7 and 8, respectively.

I would like to inform the Committee that at the request of the sponsors, action on draft resolutions A/C.1/58/L.27 and L.26, contained in clusters 8 and 10, respectively, have been postponed to a later stage of the work of the Committee.

Before the Committee proceeds to take decision on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.53, contained in cluster 1, namely, nuclear weapons, I shall give the floor to those delegations wishing to make a general statement other than explanations of vote or introduce revised draft resolutions. I see none.

I will now give the floor to those delegations who wish to make an explanation of vote before the vote.

Mr. Duarte (Brazil): On behalf of the countries of the New Agenda Coalition — Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden and Brazil — may I refer to draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.53, entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons".

One of the most significant results of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was the unequivocal undertaking given by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, to which all parties to the NPT are committed under article 6. In our view, the draft resolution misinterprets that outcome, as was the case of a similar resolution last year. By placing the unequivocal undertaking of the nuclear-weapon States in subparagraph (e) of its operative paragraph 3, this draft resolution again suggests that this undertaking is a step that is yet to be

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taken. Also, the placement of this unequivocal undertaking in operative paragraph 3 creates a contextual linkage with general and complete disarmament, which we cannot accept.

We know that the sponsors of these draft resolutions are committed to nuclear disarmament, and we continue to appreciate their commitment. As we stated at the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly last year, we would have been able to accept a return to a language that would correctly reflect the outcome of the 2000 Review Conference of the NPT. As such language has not been used, the members of the New Agenda Coalition will abstain in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.53.

Mr. Heinsberg (Germany): Germany fully shares the commitment to the cause of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and in particular to the full implementation by all States parties of their obligation under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The NPT remains the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for nuclear disarmament.

The Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference and its adoption by consensus was an important step for the NPT as well as the nuclear non-proliferation regime as a whole. We attach particular importance to the progressive and full implementation of these practical steps included in the Final Document as they chart the way to nuclear disarmament.

Unfortunately, draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.53 leaves room for possible misinterpretations as far as this commitment to the full implementation of the practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to implement article 6 of the NPT, as agreed by the 2000 NPT Review Conference is concerned, because the draft resolution does not reflect them in their entirety. This reduction remains a weak point of the draft and gives rise to concerns that we have already raised in previous years. In the light of the clear commitment to the cause of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation expressed by the draft resolution, which we fully share, Germany will vote in favour of the draft; however, we have to underline again this year that we do not interpret the selective quoting in the draft resolution as detracting from the comprehensive commitment by the States parties to the NPT to implement the conclusions of the Final Document in their entirety.

The Chairman: Do any other delegations wish to make an explanation of vote before action is taken? I see none.

The Committee will therefore now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.53, as orally amended.

A recorded vote has been requested.

Mr. Saïtar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will proceed to take action on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.53, entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Japan at the Committee's 11th meeting, on 20 October 2003. The sponsors of the draft resolution are contained in document A/C.1/58/L.53 and in document A/C.1/58/INF/2. In addition, as indicated in document A/C.1/58/INF/2/Add.3, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Gabon, Nicaragua and Timor-Leste.

Before action, I would like to draw delegations' attention to the sixth preambular paragraph. The fifth word, which is "recent", has been deleted. This is the only amendment.

The Committee would now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.53, as orally amended.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia,

Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

India, United States of America

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Brazil, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Ireland, Israel, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Somalia, South Africa, Sweden

The draft resolution was adopted by 146 votes to 2, with 16 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Papua New Guinea informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman: I will now call on those delegations wishing to express themselves in explanation of vote after the vote.

Mr. Varma (India): We have sought the floor to explain our position with regard to A/C.1/58/L.53, "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons".

India has an unwavering commitment to nuclear disarmament and the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons globally; however, the main legal instrument purported to have been intended to achieve these objectives does not seem to have been effective. India would like to reiterate that it is necessary to recognize this and instead take a path that goes beyond the essential discriminatory framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons towards equal and legitimate security for all through global nuclear disarmament.

Therefore, while we agree with the basic objectives of this draft resolution, regarding which we would have no quarrel at all in terms of principle with the draft's main sponsors, that is, the global elimination of nuclear weapons, we cannot support the draft resolution because it contains several elements that are derived from that basic flawed premise and approach. Therefore, the draft resolution remains unacceptable to India. We were compelled to cast a negative vote on this text.

Mr. McGinnis (United States of America): We too would like to provide an explanation of vote on the draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.53, "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons".

The draft resolution stresses, as its predecessors have done, the importance of urgent signature and ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), with a view to achieving its early entry into force. The United States, however, does not support the CTBT and will not become a party to it. While we do not doubt the good intentions of the sponsors of this draft resolution, the United States was again forced to vote no.

Mr. Hu Xiao Di (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation supports the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which is the thrust of the draft resolution entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons" (A/C.1/58/L.53).

However, there are still deficiencies in this draft resolution. It makes no mention of some of the fundamental principles on nuclear disarmament, and certain measures advocated in the text are not realistic or feasible in the current international situation. Therefore, the Chinese delegation abstained in the vote on this draft resolution.

Mr. Kmentt (Austria): I am taking the floor to give an explanation of Austria's vote on A/C.1/58/L.53. At the outset, I would like to thank the delegation of Japan for the elaboration and presentation of this text.

Austria has voted in favour of this draft resolution as it contains many important issues which my delegation fully supports. Austria shares Japan's long-standing commitment to the cause of nuclear

disarmament and non-proliferation and in particular to the full implementation by all States parties of their obligation under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In this respect, let me reiterate that Austria continues to attach high importance to the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference and the practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the NPT and paragraphs 3 and 4 (c) of the 1995 Decision on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament", agreed to by consensus in the Final Document.

Against this background, we regret to say that in the draft resolution on which action was now taken, operative paragraph 11, concerning the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system, again falls short of our expectations. As delegations are well aware, the issue of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and in particular of nuclear weapons, has gained enormous importance in the last year and ranks high on the international agenda. Among the key measures identified to combat the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to detect undeclared nuclear activities is, of course, the strengthening of the verification capabilities of the IAEA by means of strengthening its safeguards system. Hence, the conclusion of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols, as well as the swift implementation of the so-called "integrated safeguards system", are indispensable instruments for the IAEA to be able to verify compliance of States parties with the NPT.

The weak language chosen in operative paragraph 11 is thus in stark contrast to the importance the international community attaches to the IAEA safeguards system. Resolution GC(47)/RES/11, adopted by the IAEA General Conference on 19 September 2003, which is quoted in operative paragraph 11, contains a number of important elements which could have been included in this First Committee draft resolution.

This omission sends a wrong signal to possible violators of the NPT, that is, that the First Committee regards verification of full compliance of States parties with the obligations enshrined in the NPT of lesser importance. Austria does, of course, not subscribe to this view. On the contrary, the NPT is a carefully crafted, well-balanced Treaty, and all its articles are closely interlinked and of equal importance.

In past years, we have expressed our hope that our concerns would be taken into due consideration. In view of recent challenges to the NPT, we wish to reiterate our concerns and urge the sponsors of this important draft resolution to remedy this shortcoming next year.

Mr. Rivas (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): As to the fourteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 3 (a) of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.53 which we have just voted on and which relates to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, we should like to explain our vote with regard to document A/C.1/58/L.53.

In line with international law and the political constitution of Colombia, the provisions of the treaties signed by our country can only be considered fully valid from the date of ratification. Therefore, in public and transparent fashion for over three years, Colombia has presented its arguments before the provisional technical secretariat of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization as well as before its Preparatory Commission and subsidiary bodies.

At the third Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, held in September 2003 in Vienna, we reaffirmed our commitment to the Treaty and proposed to overcome these remaining constitutional impediments to make contributions to the Preparatory Commission prior to ratification of the Treaty.

We appreciate the interest shown by a number of States participants to find a way around these impediments such as would allow us to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible as we indeed desire. As to this specific proposal, the States participants suggested that further discussion be held in the context of the Preparatory Commission on the Treaty and its subsidiary bodies with the advice of the provisional technical secretariat.

We hope and expect that these discussions soon will lead to a positive outcome for the problem posed by our country so that we can proceed to ratify this Treaty.

Mr. Rivasseau (France): France decided to lend its support to the draft resolution submitted by Japan. We do, however, have one serious difficulty with one of the innovations introduced this year to the text, namely, the second preambular paragraph.

The way this paragraph is drafted with regard to nuclear devastation in fact departs from the formulation to which we had agreed under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and which reads as follows:

> "Considering the devastation that would be visited upon all mankind by a nuclear war and the consequent need to make every effort to avert the danger of such a war and to take measures to safeguard the security of peoples,
>
> "Believing that the proliferation of nuclear weapons would seriously enhance the danger of a nuclear war."

This is why France wishes to emphasize that our efforts fit into the purview of the NPT, and in agreeing to the text proposed by Japan, we do not mean to be entering into any commitment which differs from those already existing under the NPT.

Let me recall that the paramount guarantee for France's security is nuclear deterrence. Nothing in the second preambular paragraph could possibly countermand the rights and obligations my country has it, that regard as defined by the United Nations Charter.

I should finally like to underscore that my country's decision to accept the text in its present form is valid here and now. It is a gesture we have made, mindful of our ties of friendship with Japan, and cannot be construed as a precedent, including for our future discussions within this Committee or in other forums dealing with nuclear issues.

Mr. Durrani (Pakistan): My delegation is taking the floor to explain our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.53, entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons".

My delegation finds several provisions of the draft resolution questionable. It places inordinate emphasis on non-proliferation rather than nuclear disarmament, representing a regression in this vital area. We also cannot endorse the contents of some of the preambular paragraphs and have reservations on operative paragraph 1.

Pakistan, as a non-party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, (NPT) understands that we are under no obligation to implement operative paragraph 3, including several subparagraphs therein, nor are we bound by any of the provisions which emanate from the NPT Review Conference or other forums in which Pakistan is not represented. This understanding enabled my delegation to abstain rather than vote against this draft resolution.

Mr. Tengku Hussein (Malaysia): My delegation should like to explain our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.53.

We voted in favour of the draft resolution as we support efforts towards the objective of a nuclear-free world. The continued existence of nuclear weapons poses a threat to all humanity. Their use would have catastrophic consequences for all life on earth. All of us recognize that the only credible and absolute defence against a nuclear catastrophe is the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Malaysia shares the deep concern expressed by the sponsors of this draft resolution regarding the growing danger posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, as reflected in the second preambular paragraph. However, the lack of progress in the area of nuclear disarmament is frustrating to all countries, organizations and individuals that are committed to the goal of totally eliminating these weapons. The proliferation of nuclear weapons, including plans to build new nuclear weapons as well as plans for their possible use in future military conflicts, is alarming.

The international community must address this dangerous situation in a concerted and non-discriminatory manner, in a manner that is consistent with our obligations under international law. We must support efforts that seek to bring all countries together in creating a nuclear-free world. The vitality of multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions in addressing disarmament and international security issues must be preserved and strengthened.

The Chairman: That concludes the list of speakers in explanation of vote after the vote. I do not see any other requests for the floor; the First Committee will therefore now proceed to take action on the one draft resolution under cluster 4, namely, conventional weapons, and that draft resolution is contained in document A/C.1/58/L.43. I will first give the floor to those delegations wishing to make general statements or to introduce revised draft resolutions.

Mrs. Laohaphan (Thailand): Before the meeting moves on to action on document A/C.1/58/L.43,

entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction", I would like to make an oral amendment to the eleventh preambular paragraph which now reads as follows:

> "Noting with satisfaction that additional States have ratified or acceded to the Convention, bringing the total number of States that have formally accepted the obligations of the Convention to one hundred and thirty-nine."

As Sudan and Burundi have recently deposited their instruments of ratification on 13 and 22 October, respectively, the number of States that have formally accepted the obligations of the Mine-Ban Convention is now 141. Accordingly I ask, through you, Mr. Chairman, the representatives of the First Committee to accept the amendment.

Given the humanitarian nature of the Convention and the devastating effects of anti-personnel mines on human development worldwide, we hope that the draft resolution will receive overwhelming support from the Committee. We thank all the sponsors of the draft and hope that many of those not in the position to sponsor the draft resolution can vote in favour of the text.

The Chairman: I have no other requests for the floor. Do any delegations wish to express themselves in explanation of vote before the vote? I see none. The Committee will therefore now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.43, as orally amended a moment ago.

A recorded vote has been requested.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.43, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Thailand at the Committee's 15th meeting on 24 October 2003. The sponsors of the draft resolution are contained in document A/C.1/58/L.43 and in document A/C.1/58/INF/2 and A/C.1/58/INF/2/Add.1. Also, Turkmenistan has joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

In this connection, I would like to put into the record the following statement of financial implications on behalf of the Secretary-General.

By paragraphs 8 and 9 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General, in accordance with article 12, paragraph 1, of the Convention, to undertake the preparations necessary to convene the Convention's First Review Conference at Nairobi, from 29 November to 3 December 2004, and requests the Secretary-General, on behalf of States parties and in accordance with article 12, paragraph 3, of the Convention, to invite States not parties to the Convention, as well as the United Nations, other relevant international organizations or institutions, regional organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and relevant non-governmental organizations, to attend the First Review Conference as observers.

The Secretary-General wishes to draw the attention of Member States to the fact that the cost of the First Review Conference, in accordance with article 14 of the Convention, would be borne by States parties and States not parties to the Convention participating in the First Review Conference, in accordance with the United Nations scale of assessments, adjusted appropriately. The Secretariat will prepare preliminary cost estimates for the First Review Conference for the approval of the States parties following a planning mission to Nairobi to assess the requirements for conference facilities and services. In this regard it is noted that, following established practice, the United Nations would levy a charge at the rate of 13 per cent of expenditures to defray the administrative and other support costs incurred in connection with such preparation. That charge would also be borne by States parties and States not parties to the Convention participating in the First Review Conference.

It is recalled that all activities related to international conventions or treaties that, under their respective legal arrangements, ought to be financed outside the regular budget of the United Nations may be undertaken by the Secretariat only when sufficient funding is received in advance from States parties and States not parties to the Convention participating in the meeting.

The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.43, as orally revised by Thailand. In the eleventh preambular paragraph, the

last number, which now reads "one hundred and thirty-nine", would read "one hundred and forty-one".

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Azerbaijan, China, Cuba, Egypt, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Micronesia (Federated States of), Morocco, Myanmar, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, United States of America, Viet Nam

The draft resolution, as orally amended, was adopted by 143 votes to none, with 19 abstentions.

The Chairman: I will now call upon those delegations wishing to express themselves in explanation of vote after the vote.

Mr. Varma (India): India has abstained in the vote on this draft resolution. We believe that we share its ultimate objective and are committed to a non-discriminatory global ban on anti-personnel landmines through a phased process that addresses the legitimate defence requirements of States while ameliorating the critical humanitarian crisis that has resulted from an indiscriminate transfer and use of landmines.

We believe that the phased approach commends itself as a confidence-building process enabling States, especially with long borders, to safeguard their legitimate security needs. The process of complete elimination of anti-personnel mines will be facilitated by addressing the legitimate defensive role of anti-personnel landmines for operational requirements under the defence doctrines of countries concerned, through the availability of appropriate militarily effective and non-lethal alternative technologies that can perform cost-effectively the legitimate defence role of anti-personnel landmines.

India would support negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for a ban on transfer of anti-personnel landmines on the basis of a mandate that reflects the interests of all the delegations. India has played and continues to play an active role in the Convention on Conventional Weapons process and has ratified all its protocols, including amended Protocol II on landmines.

Since 1997, we have discontinued the production of non-detectable anti-personnel landmines and have completed design-development trials of detectable anti-personnel landmines.

Mr. Gala López (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): As we have done in past years, my delegation abstained during the vote on the draft resolution now embodied in document A/C.1/58/L.43, dealing with the total prohibition of anti-personnel mines.

Cuba always has devoted due attention and importance to the legitimate humanitarian concerns associated with the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines. Cuba firmly supports the prohibition of all indiscriminate and irresponsible use of anti-personnel mines.

We stand opposed to the use of anti-personnel mines in domestic conflicts, as well as the use of non-detectable mines and, in general, any use of mines that can harm the civilian population. We take the view that the ultimate purpose of negotiations on anti-personnel mines throughout has been that of guaranteeing maximum protection to the civilian population and not that of restricting the military capability of countries to preserve their own sovereignty and territorial integrity. This corresponds with the right to legitimate self-defence, as recognized in the Charter of the United Nations.

Once again this year, we appreciate the absence of an acknowledgement of legitimate security interests in the text of the draft resolution just adopted. For Cuba, a country for more than 40 years subjected to a policy of constant hostility and aggression by the country with the greatest military and economic power in the world, it is impossible to give up the use of this kind of weapon to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We shall continue fully to support all efforts which, while maintaining the necessary balance between humanitarian issues and those of national security, would be aimed at eliminating the terrible effects caused among the civilian population in many countries by the indiscriminate and irresponsible use of land-based anti-personnel mines.

Ms. Kim Ji-Hee (Republic of Korea): As previously, my delegation has abstained from the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.43, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction", for the well known reason that it contains provisions inconsistent with the legitimate security needs of the Republic of Korea arising from the unique situation on the Korean Peninsula.

Nevertheless, the Republic of Korea wholeheartedly supports the humanitarian cause of the Mine-Ban Convention, which aims to eliminate the consequences of the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines. My Government has joined its national efforts to this noble end, including annual contributions to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance. In addition, my Government has actively participated in the relevant discussions within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, since the Republic of Korea acceded to its amended Protocol II in November 2001.

Mr. Durrani (Pakistan): I have asked for the floor to explain our position with regard to the draft resolution on implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

Pakistan's position on the question of anti-personnel landmines is determined by legitimate security concerns. Given our security compulsions and the need to guard our long borders, not protected by any natural obstacle, the use of landmines forms a natural part of our self-defence strategy. As such, it is not possible for Pakistan to agree to the demands for the complete prohibition of anti-personnel mines until such time that viable alternatives are available. Therefore, Pakistan was constrained to abstain on the draft resolution; however, Pakistan is against the irresponsible use of landmines, which has caused so much destruction and misery. We remain committed to ensuring the highest standards of responsibility in the use of these defensive weapons.

Pakistan is a party to the amended Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons that regulates the use of landmines, in both internal and external conflicts, to prevent civilians from falling victim to landmines. We are continuing to implement the Protocol with the greatest earnestness.

It is our conviction that truly universal norms and standards can and should be set within the framework of the United Nations, incorporating humanitarian and security requirements.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I have requested the floor to make a brief statement explaining the vote of the Russian Federation on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.43.

The Russian Federation is not a party to this Convention. Therefore, we cannot support the draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.43. Russia would be prepared to

accede to this Convention when conditions are provided for the actual implementation of its provisions. The Russian Federation, at the same time, is very much in favour of a stage-by-stage progress towards this end.

Mr. Min (Myanmar): I should like to explain my delegation's position on the resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.43, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction".

Myanmar is not a signatory State, nor is it a State party to the Ottawa Convention, nor did it participate in the Ottawa process. But we respect the position of the countries that sign and ratify the Ottawa Convention. In principle, Myanmar is in favour of banning export, transfer and indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines. At the same time, we believe that every State has the right to self-defence. As a matter of fact, the sanctity of the right to self-defence is enshrined in article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

It is therefore essential that every State should be able to exercise the right of self-defence when its national security and sovereign interests are at stake. We recognize that the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines is causing death and serious injuries to innocent children, women and men around the world. Easy availability of landmines is the main reason behind those tragedies. Our efforts can go a long way towards preventing those tragedies if we concentrate on addressing the illicit trafficking and indiscriminate use of landmines by non-State actors. In our opinion, a sweeping, total ban of anti-personnel mines is not yet a practical and effective measure under the prevailing circumstances.

We believe the proper forum to deal with this problem of illicit trafficking and indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines is the Conference on Disarmament. For this reason, my delegation has abstained in the voting on the draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.43.

Mr. Najafi (Islamic Republic of Iran): The Islamic Republic of Iran has always expressed that it shares the sentiments of the States parties to the Ottawa Convention for sponsoring the draft resolution, now contained in document A/C.1/58/L.43, and submitting it for consideration and action by the General Assembly.

Landmines have been used irresponsibly by military and armed groups during civil wars in certain regions of the world, and consequently have claimed a great number of innocent lives, particularly among women and children. This situation is not acceptable, and we welcome every effort to stop this trend.

The Ottawa Convention on Landmines, however, is not a conclusive and comprehensive response to this tragedy. A real campaign to combat the irresponsible uses of landmines needs to be far-reaching and should involve different and multifaceted related aspects of the issue.

This Convention could be more effective if concerns of countries with long land borders would be taken into consideration.

Therefore, the Convention, due to this reality, has not been received with enthusiasm in certain regions. Landmines continue to be the sole effective means to ensure the minimum security requirements of borders in countries with long land borders. The difficulty to monitor sensitive long areas by established and permanent guarding forces or effective warning systems leaves no option for these countries other than resorting to landmines. These mines, however, are used under strict established rules and regulations to protect civilians.

The landmines process is an evolving one, and complementary efforts need to be pursued. More efforts are necessary to explore new alternatives to landmines and to extend international cooperation in this field. In the meantime, observance and strengthening the standards to limit the use of landmines could be encouraged. Moreover, international efforts also need to be made to speed up the mine-clearance activities within the United Nations system.

My delegation, while appreciating the essence and objectives of the draft resolution, due to its particular concerns and considerations, could not support the draft resolution, and therefore voted to abstain.

Mr. Pant (Nepal): My delegation has taken the floor to explain its vote after the vote. We voted in favour of the draft resolution on anti-personnel landmines, contained in document A/C.1/58/L.43, in keeping with our strong moral commitment to it.

Nepal has always remained an advocate of the Ottawa Convention on Landmines. Despite our desire to join the rank of the nations which are parties to this important global compact, it will be some time before my country will be able to sign it, owing to its internal security concerns.

Mr. Leck (Singapore): I have asked for the floor to explain Singapore's vote on document A/C.1/58/L.43. Singapore's position on anti-personnel landmines has been clear and open. Singapore supports and will continue to support all initiatives against the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines, especially when they are directed at innocent and defenceless civilians.

With this in mind, Singapore declared a two-year moratorium in May 1996, on the export of anti-personnel landmines without self-neutralizing mechanisms. In February 1998, Singapore expanded the moratorium to include all types of anti-personnel landmines, not just those without self-neutralizing mechanisms, and extended the moratorium indefinitely.

At the same time, like several other countries, Singapore firmly believes that the legitimate security concerns and the right to self-defence of any State cannot be disregarded. A blanket ban on all types of anti-personnel landmines might therefore be counterproductive.

Singapore supports international efforts to resolve the humanitarian concerns over anti-personnel landmines. We will continue to work with members of the international community towards finding a durable and truly global solution.

The Chairman: That concludes the list of speakers in explanation of vote after the vote.

The Committee will now proceed to take action under cluster 7, disarmament machinery, and the one draft resolution we will consider under cluster 7 is the text contained in document A/C.1/58/L.28.

Do any delegations wish to make general statements? I see none.

Do any delegations wish to express themselves in explanation of vote before the vote? I see none.

The Committee will therefore now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.28.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.28, entitled "United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Non-Aligned Movement at the Committee's 14th meeting, on 23 October 2003. The additional sponsors of the draft resolution are contained in document A/C.1/58/INF/2. In this connection, I would like to draw members' attention to programme budget implications of the draft resolution, which are contained in document A/C.1/58/L.59.

The Chairman: The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that the draft resolution be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

The draft resolution was adopted.

The Chairman: Are there any delegations wishing to express themselves in explanation of vote after the vote after the action? I see none.

The Committee will therefore now proceed to take action under the one draft resolution that we will consider today under cluster 8, namely, "Other disarmament measures". That draft resolution is contained in document A/C.1/58/L.16/Rev.1. Do any delegations wish to make general statements? I see none. Are there any delegations wishing to express themselves in explanation of vote before the vote? I see none.

The Committee will therefore now proceed to take action on draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.16/Rev.1.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now take a decision on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.16/Rev.1, entitled "National legislation on transfer of arms, military equipment and dual-use goods and technology". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of the Netherlands at the 14th meeting of the Committee, on 23 October 2003.

The Chairman: The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that the draft resolution be adopted by the Committee without a vote.

If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

The draft resolution was adopted.

The Chairman: Are there any delegations wishing to express themselves in explanation of vote after the vote?

Mr. Cala López (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to make reference to draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.16/Rev.1, entitled "National legislation on transfer of arms, military equipment and dual-use goods and technology", which deals with an issue of particular importance.

Although our delegation has rallied round to the consensus, we should like to place on record some points with regard to this issue. In Cuba's view, it is within the context of international juridically binding treaties, negotiated multilaterally, and of universal scope and non-discriminatory in nature, where one can effectively guarantee strict international control over arms transfers and the transfers of military equipment and dual-use goods and technology.

The existence of export control regimes, based on selective and discriminatory criteria, in actual practice represent a serious obstacle in the way of application of the inalienable right all States have to use for peaceful purposes various means and technologies existing in the chemical, biological and nuclear arenas. Cuba takes the view that the model of export and import controls that is the most effective is the one negotiated and applied in a multilateral framework.

By the same token, any and all international export and import controls must, among its essential prerequisites, have the maximum widest possible participation of countries ready to make compatible their own national controls and regulations with a view to facilitating the monitoring of activities subject to such regulation. Only such participation, broad-ranging and non-discriminatory in nature, can guarantee the effectiveness of compliance with the effort to attain the objectives set. At the same time, Cuba is convinced that multilateral efforts must be complemented with measures adopted at the national level, such as to strengthen the commitments entered into by States in the area of international disarmament treaties and treaties on non-proliferation to which they are parties.

The Chairman: I do not see any other delegations wishing to make an explanation of vote, and therefore, I would like to inform you that at its next meeting, the Committee will continue to take action on the draft resolutions, as contained in informal working paper No. 5, which will be distributed to you shortly.

Mr. Lunaces (United States of America): On behalf of the delegations of the Russian Federation and of the United States, our delegation would like to call the attention of our fellow delegates to today's *Journal*, which contains the following notice:

> "Meeting to address U.S.-Russian non-proliferation measures to meet global security challenges (organized by the Permanent Missions of the Russian Federation and the United States)."

With the indulgence of the Chair, I would like to read the one sentence entry:

> "The U.S. Secretary of Energy and the Russian Minister of Atomic Energy will co-host a meeting to address U.S.-Russian non-proliferation measures to meet global security challenges to be held on Wednesday, 5 November 2003, at 4 p.m. in the Economic and Social Council Chamber."

We call the attention of delegations to this because of the announcement and the potential overlap in Wednesday's potential meeting of this Committee and of these presentations. We merely wish to call it to the attention of delegates who may be interested in attending the other meeting as well.

The Chairman: Before adjourning the meeting, I would like to inform the Committee that the ceremony of presentation of the 2003 United Nations Disarmament Fellowship certificates would be taking place in this conference room immediately after this morning's meeting of the Committee. Consequently, I kindly ask all delegations to remain in their seats for the ceremony, and to congratulate our junior colleagues.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.

United Nations A/C.1/58/PV.20

General Assembly
Fifty-eighth session

Official Records

First Committee
20th meeting
Monday, 3 November 2003, 2.30 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Sareva ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 2.45 p.m.

Agenda items 62 to 80 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: The First Committee will today continue to take decisions on the draft resolutions listed in informal working paper No. 5 — which was distributed to all delegations during the previous meeting — beginning with cluster 1, namely, "Nuclear weapons". However, we will not be able to take action on all draft resolutions contained in informal paper No. 5. Action on some draft resolutions has been postponed due to requests from the sponsors.

Therefore, after completing action on cluster 1 draft resolutions A/C.1/58/L.19, A/C.1/58/L.23 and A/C.1/58/L.47, the Committee will proceed to take a decision draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.46/Rev.1, which is under cluster 4. Thereafter the Committee will take up draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.27, which is under cluster 8. In other words, we will not be dealing with draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.11 and the amendment to it contained in document A/C.1/58/L.58; nor will we take action on draft resolutions A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1 and A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1, both of which are under cluster 1. We will also not take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1, which is under cluster 4, or on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.25/Rev.1, which is under cluster 7. Finally, we will not take action today on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.26, which is under cluster 10.

Before the Committee proceeds to take decisions on the draft resolutions before it — beginning with draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.19, which is under cluster 1, namely, "Nuclear weapons" — I shall give the floor to delegations wishing to make general statements, other than explanations of vote, or to introduce revised draft resolutions.

Mr. Albin Santos (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The current international situation requires concrete and specific measures to address the threats we face. That is not a new assertion, but it has certainly taken on a new dimension in recent years. The objectives of disarmament, and of nuclear disarmament in particular, as well as disarmament as regards other weapons of mass destruction, are more relevant today than ever before.

With those goals in mind, at the beginning of the work of the First Committee, on 6 October, I announced the intention of the delegation of Mexico to propose during this session of the General Assembly the convening of a conference of signatories and States Parties to treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones.

In introducing draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.19, the delegation of Mexico sought to make a contribution in two areas. First, we sought to improve dialogue, cooperation and the exchange of experiences among countries and regions that have established nuclear-

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

03-59272 (E)

weapon-free zones, with the goal of achieving higher levels of coordination and of promoting the full implementation of those treaties and their protocols.

Secondly, we sought to make concrete progress in our collective disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation obligations, thereby making a positive contribution to the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In the course of the consultations held by the delegation of Mexico, it became clear that, in addition to the countries that have signed and ratified treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, the overwhelming majority of countries share the objectives contained in draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.19.

I regret to have to point out that, in the process of identifying and quantifying the financial implications of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.19, we have not enjoyed the timely support we would have desired from the Secretariat. I must also say that at all times the Secretariat listened with attention and interest to our proposals and questions. Nevertheless, we were still surprised at the lateness of its responses. In fact, it was not until 30 October 2003 that the Secretariat circulated, in document A/C.1/58/L.60, the costs associated with the holding of a conference on nuclear-weapon-free zones at United Nations Headquarters. The final figure is almost 30 per cent higher than the preliminary estimate we received informally on 21 October, which had served as the basis for consultations with our respective capitals. I must also acknowledge that the Secretariat had warned that the preliminary figures might be revised upwards, but we never imagined the magnitude of that increase.

Under the circumstances, and in spite of the broad support for the process contained in draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.19, we came to the conclusion that there is not enough time to conclude further consultations between the signatory and ratifying States of nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties on alternative solutions to achieve the objectives proposed in the draft resolution. For those reasons, the Mexican delegation will not request the General Assembly to take a decision at this session on the text contained in draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.19.

The Chairman: If there are no other delegations wishing to make general statements or introduce revised draft resolutions, the First Committee will now proceed to take decisions on draft resolutions contained in cluster one, beginning with draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.23, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East".

Before doing so, I shall call upon those delegations wishing to explain their position or vote before the vote in a consolidated statement on the draft resolutions contained in cluster one.

I give the floor to those representatives wishing to speak in explanation of vote or position.

Mr. Bar (Israel): I would like to give an explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.23.

The First Committee is called upon to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.23, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", a resolution that is patently one-sided, contentious and divisive and undermines rather than enhances confidence between the States of the region.

Since this draft resolution was first introduced, many alarming developments have occurred directly related to the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Some of those developments have only recently become apparent to the international community. In addition, other efforts are under way to acquire weapons of mass destruction and missile capabilities in the region, as our delegation pointed out during the general debate.

The bias of this draft resolution stems from its failure to recognize that the real risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East emanates from countries that, although parties to international treaties, do not comply with their relevant international obligations. Those countries are engaged in ongoing efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles — efforts that have a destabilizing effect not only at the regional level, but on a global scale as well.

The draft resolution chooses to ignore internationally acknowledged evidence that some States abuse arms control arrangements in order to obtain technology for military purposes. The draft resolution also overlooks the profound hostility of some States in the region towards Israel and their refusal to maintain any form of peaceful reconciliation or coexistence with it. Adopting a resolution that does not reflect those realities will not serve the greater objective of curbing nuclear proliferation in the Middle

East. Resolutions regarding the complex arms control problems in the Middle East should focus on objective ways to address them as they exist.

This draft resolution focuses entirely on one country that has never threatened its neighbours nor abrogated its obligations under any disarmament treaty. Moreover, it singles out Israel in a way that no other United Nations Member State is being singled out in the First Committee. Singling out Israel is both counterproductive to confidence-building and peace in the region and raises questions about the credibility of this body.

Israel's supreme objective is to achieve peace and security. Its non-proliferation and arms control policy is aimed at supporting that objective. The constructive approach adopted over the years by Israel towards arms control and non-proliferation efforts was described in our statement during the general debate. It is best demonstrated by our attitude on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, despite substantive reservations regarding its modalities, which is strongly undermined by the introduction of this biased draft resolution.

The unbalanced approach of the draft resolution has not been remedied by the reference it makes to the need for compliance by countries with their international obligations. Indeed, the fact that some countries consider the language of this draft resolution balanced is a source of deep disappointment to us.

The First Committee should not become a venue for political discrimination. We therefore call on all delegates to vote against this draft resolution.

Mr. Gala (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to make a statement in explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.47, "Nuclear disarmament".

The elimination of nuclear weapons continues to be the highest priority for the international community in the field of disarmament and my country has always supported initiatives aimed at the speedy attainment of that objective. In that regard, my delegation would like to recall that at the thirteenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Kuala Lumpur this year, profound concern was expressed at the slow pace of progress on nuclear disarmament.

Once again, Cuba will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.47, entitled "Nuclear disarmament", because we believe it appropriately reflects the priority that should be attached to nuclear disarmament. We fully support the appeal to the Conference on Disarmament, contained in that text, that it establish a special committee on a priority basis at the beginning of 2004 to deal with nuclear disarmament and to begin negotiations on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament, leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Chairman: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the vote. The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.23.

A recorded vote has been requested.

We will first vote on the sixth preambular paragraph and thereafter on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.23 as a whole.

I now call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the vote on the sixth preambular paragraph.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.23, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the League of Arab States at the 14th meeting of the First Committee, on 23 October 2003.

The Committee will now first proceed to take action on the sixth preambular paragraph.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya,

Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

India, Israel

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Micronesia (Federated States of), Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Vanuatu

The sixth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.23 was retained by 142 votes to 2, with 11 abstentions.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.23 as a whole. I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.23 as a whole.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, Micronesia (Federated States of), United States of America

Abstaining:

Australia, Cameroon, Canada, Ethiopia, India, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Vanuatu

Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.23, as a whole, was adopted by 146 votes to 3, with 10 abstentions.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.47.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.47 entitled "Nuclear Disarmament".

This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Myanmar, at the Committee's 15th meeting, on 24 October 2003. The sponsors of the draft resolution are contained in document A/C.1/58/L.47 and in document A/C.1/L.58/INF/2 and Add.3. In addition, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Benin, Samoa, Switzerland and Timor-Leste.

The Chairman: I recognize the representative of Switzerland, I presume on a point of order.

Mr. Halter (Switzerland): I just heard that Switzerland was newly listed as a sponsor to this draft resolution. I have to correct this, since this is — unfortunately for the rest of the sponsors — not the case.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of Switzerland for that clarification and indeed, as far as I understand, the new sponsor is supposed to be Swaziland and not Switzerland.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, India, Ireland, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritius, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Sweden, Ukraine

Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.47 was adopted by 101 votes to 43, with 18 abstentions.

The Chairman: I now call on those delegations wishing to express themselves in explanation of vote after the vote.

Mr. Haitao Wu (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation voted for draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.47, entitled "Nuclear Disarmament". China supports the objectives and the main thrust of this draft resolution and agrees with some of the important nuclear disarmament measures contained in it.

However, in the current international situation, it is premature to implement some specific nuclear disarmament measures set forth in this draft resolution. We are of the view that all nuclear disarmament measures, including interim steps, must follow the principle of maintaining global strategic stability and undiminished security for all countries.

Mr. Varma (India): We have requested the floor to set forth our positions on our votes on draft

resolutions contained in documents A/C.1/58/L.23 and L.47, after we have cast our votes. With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.23, we wish to state the following.

India abstained on this draft resolution as a whole and cast a negative vote on the sixth preambular paragraph, as it makes reference to the final document of the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) held in the year 2000, on which India's position is well known.

Our position on the fifth preambular paragraph of this draft should also be seen in this light, even though we have not asked for a separate vote on that particular preambular paragraph. We believe that it is necessary to limit the focus of this draft resolution to the region that it intends to address, while noting the substantial contribution made by Egypt, the main sponsor of this draft resolution, to disarmament efforts, which we fully respect. India considers that the issues in this draft resolution have received wide-spread consideration in the international community and we hope that it will be possible to make progress on the issues involved in the coming years through positive contributions by the concerned States of the region.

I now turn to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.47, entitled "Nuclear disarmament". India abstained on the draft resolution, "Nuclear disarmament", as contained in A/C.1/58/L.47. India has a long-standing and unwavering commitment to nuclear disarmament and the global elimination of nuclear weapons. We had, in fact, supported this draft resolution until the year 2000; however, the draft resolution has now moved in a direction, which includes elements on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, on which India's position is well known. Therefore, we have abstained on the draft resolution as a whole. This vote is, however, not a reflection on other elements of this draft resolution which we share with Myanmar and other sponsors as part of the long-standing Non-Aligned Movement and Group of 21 positions on nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Meyer (Canada): Canada wishes to explain its vote on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/58/L.23, "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East".

Canada has long supported the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and in this connection, has long called on India, Israel and Pakistan to accede to and abide by this Treaty. Canada supports the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, which called on all States not yet party to the Treaty to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States.

However, in our view, this draft resolution in its operative paragraphs fails to deal with our concerns respecting compliance with the NPT. Canada maintained its abstention on this draft resolution because, like last year's text, it fails to deal appropriately, in our view, with both adherence to and full compliance with the NPT.

Mr. Durrani (Pakistan): I have asked for the floor to express our support for the draft resolution entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", as contained in document A/C.1/58/L.23.

My delegation would like to express our reservations on the sixth preambular paragraph, which calls for the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Pakistan is not a party to the NPT. As a State which possesses nuclear weapons, we cannot obviously accede to the NPT or accept these provisions in the draft resolution, as contained in document A/C.1/58/L.23.

Ms. Inoguchi (Japan): I have asked for the floor to explain Japan's abstention in voting on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.47, entitled "Nuclear disarmament".

As I stated in my explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.31, concerning the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, it is Japan's fervent desire and firm conviction that the use of nuclear weapons should never be repeated, and that continuous efforts should be made towards achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

Having said that, as far as draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.47 is concerned, I would like to state the following: My delegation takes note of a number of positive elements concerning nuclear disarmament in this draft resolution. For example, it contains a reference to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a cornerstone for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. My delegation also appreciates that this draft resolution incorporates some of the steps towards nuclear disarmament agreed in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference.

However, this draft resolution does not command the full support of my Government, and my delegation made the difficult choice of abstaining in the voting.

One of the reasons for this is that the draft resolution contains the element of a specified time frame for nuclear disarmament. My delegation firmly believes that the steps towards nuclear disarmament should be realistic and progressive, with the involvement of the nuclear-weapon States from the very beginning of the process.

Therefore, my delegation would prefer to see a different approach from that proposed in this draft resolution towards the shared goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Chairman: Are there any other delegations wishing to make an explanation of vote after the vote under cluster 1? I see none.

The Committee will therefore now proceed to take decision on the one draft resolution which we will be dealing with under cluster 4, namely, conventional weapons, document A/C.1/58/L.46/Rev.1.

Before we take action, I will call on those delegations wishing to make general statements or introduce revised draft resolutions under cluster 4.

Mr. Meyer (Canada): Activity on small arms and light weapons issues has been extensive and intensive in the past year. An important feature was the July 2003 First Biennial Meeting of States on the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, adopted at the 2001 Conference. It is Canada's strong wish to see sustained progress at the national, regional and global levels on implementation of the Programme of Action. We have been very active in this regard working at all levels, and with a range of partners, to advance its implementation. We are committed to sustaining work on implementation of the Programme of Action, looking ahead to the next Biennial Meeting in 2005, and also to the 2006 Review Conference, which we hope will take us further on this important road.

In this regard, Canada strongly encourages work in regional organizations. For example, as a member of the Organization of American States, we are proud of the work on the small arms and light weapons issue that has been achieved by this organization. More generally, we have been supportive and frequently engaged in the small-arms-and-light-weapons-related work of organizations and subregional organizations in other regions.

Within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Canada has long been an advocate of developing far-reaching commitments as well as practical contributions with regard to the challenge of small arms and light weapons. We share with other members much satisfaction with the achievements, which began with the adoption of the important November 2000 OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

The development of the best practice guides is a good example of such practical contributions. The best practice guides deal with a range of important topics: national marketing systems, national procedures for the control of manufacture, national export and import policy, national control of brokering activities, national procedures for stockpile management and security, definitions for indicators of a surplus, techniques and procedures for destruction, and small arms measures as part of disarmament demobilization and reintegration. We hope these best practice guides will find a wide audience, and prove of use to members of other regional and subregional organizations.

It remains our hope that the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms will continue to be carried out with the maximum unity of direction and purpose that has been the case to date in order to move closer to the shared goal of a world in which people no longer feel threatened by these weapons.

The Chairman: If there are no other delegations wishing to make general statements, the First Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.46/Rev.1.

Does any delegation wish to take the floor in explanation of the vote before the vote? There is none.

I now give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.46/Rev.1, entitled "Promotion at the regional level in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe of the United Nations programme of action on the illicit trade in small arms

and light weapons in all its aspects", which was introduced by the representative of France at the Committee's 13th meeting on 22 October 2003.

A list of the sponsors of the draft resolution are contained in document A/C.1/58/L.46/Rev.1 and in document A/C.1/58/INF/2 and Add.1-3. In addition, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Canada, Kyrgyzstan, Federated States of Micronesia, Sri Lanka and United States of America.

The Chairman: I thank the Secretary of the Committee for his statement.

The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.46/Rev.1 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.46/Rev.1 was adopted.

The Chairman: I now call on those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Kellerman (South Africa): The South African delegation wishes to place on record its position with respect to draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.46/Rev.1, "Promotion at the regional level in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe of the United Nations programme of action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects".

South Africa's policy on small arms, identifying the importance of regional approaches to address the problem of the uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons, is based on regional concerns and practices an incremental approach. That approach reinforces national action and also ensures that, as each region of the world develops an indigenous approach, the building blocks to deal effectively with this issue globally are put in place.

South Africa, together with the other member States of the Southern African Development Community, has worked hard at the subregional level to, among other things, augment our national efforts to combat illicit small arms and light weapons by developing a regional, legally binding instrument on firearms. Other regions have also undertaken similar steps and launched important initiatives on small arms.

The United Nations programme of action represents the consensus view of the international community on the action to be undertaken at the national, regional and international levels to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. The successful conclusion of the First Biennial Meeting of States to consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action demonstrated the commitment by States and non-governmental organizations to implement the Programme of Action. Progress has been made on the national implementation of the Programme of Action and we are at the threshold of initiating important progress on the international implementation of the action Programme. The First Biennial Meeting of States was also briefed on and discussed important regional initiatives on small arms.

The draft resolution submitted by Colombia, Japan and South Africa on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects (A/C.1/58/L.1) has operationalized the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels on a consensus basis. Without prejudice to individual or collective efforts being undertaken at the national, regional or international level on small arms, it calls for the early and full implementation of the Programme of Action, recognizes initiatives, and calls for the mobilization of resources to promote its implementation.

Member States, as well as the Chair of the First Committee, have also expressed views on the working methodology of this Committee. South Africa supports the view that we should carefully evaluate our work so as to ensure that we avoid the duplication of draft resolutions that deal with the same issue. South Africa's strong commitment to regional approaches on small arms is therefore encapsulated within the Programme of Action. South Africa believes that the Programme of Action should be implemented comprehensively and that its implementation should not be divided up in different draft resolutions with divergent priorities and initiatives being emphasized. Such an approach would retard, rather than advance, its implementation.

Mr. Gala (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): In connection with draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.46/Rev.1

just adopted without a vote, my delegation would like to make the following statement.

While we do recognize that the text adopted contains favourable amendments vis-a-vis the original version, in our opinion the relevance of the draft resolution is not clear, given the existence of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1, which, in a more general context and using consensus language, addresses the subject of combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. In fact, that draft resolution contains a preambular paragraph that notes with satisfaction the regional efforts that are being undertaken in support of implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action adopted in 2001.

We see no reason to single out the best practices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Moreover, any attempt to universalize such practices should not lose sight of the fact that every region has its own characteristics and specificities. Other regions and subregions might feel entitled to submit a draft resolution along the same lines, which would run counter to the objective of rationalizing the number of draft resolutions submitted in the First Committee — a measure that is staunchly defended by some of the countries sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.46/Rev.1.

Any regional group has the right to circulate an official document in order to disseminate or publicize its experiences in this field, but that is no reason for the General Assembly to validate or standardize those experiences through the adoption of a resolution.

Mr. Mammedaliyev (Azerbaijan): I have asked for the floor to explain our vote after the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.46/Rev.1.

Azerbaijan has joined the consensus on the draft resolution because we support its main thrust, values and objectives. Azerbaijan fully shares the international community's stand that illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons represents a grave threat to security and stability. Easy access to small arms, coupled with their damaging capacity, makes them a serious challenge that the international community faces in the new millennium.

At the regional level, Azerbaijan makes every effort to strengthen cooperation with regional States to jointly tackle every kind of illicit trafficking. In particular, Azerbaijan has engaged in such cooperation within the multilateral framework of the GUUAM countries — Georgia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova. We are convinced that increased transparency in small arms sales will significantly contribute to the security and stability of the member States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

However, the present draft resolution seems to be difficult to implement at the sub-regional level in the South Caucasus because of a number of armed conflicts in the area, in particular the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. In this regard, Azerbaijan has repeatedly drawn the attention of the international community to the illegal transfers of huge amounts of weaponry, including small arms and light weapons, to Armenia. Various types of conventional weapons continue to be deployed and stockpiled in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

The occupation of territories, terrorist activities, arms and drug smuggling and human trafficking in the territories controlled by separatists and foreign military presences hamper the independent development of the three States of the region. Our delegation would like to emphasize that Azerbaijan regards regional political and economic cooperation with Armenia to be possible only after a settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, based on full respect of our sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Mr. Issa (Egypt): Very briefly, the delegation of Egypt, while it did have problems with the initial version of the draft resolution that was circulated, wishes to commend the spirit in which the delegation of France anticipated and conducted its consultations, in a manner that made it possible for us to join consensus on this draft resolution. We also wish to convey our thanks to the representative of France, Mr. François Rivasseau for the manner in which he conducted his consultations, leading us to the current positive result on this draft resolution.

Mr. Varma (India): India has joined the consensus on draft resolution L.46/Rev.1 and we would like to compliment the delegation of France and other sponsors of this draft resolution in bringing forth the important regional element, which is an essential component of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

We, too, are satisfied with the process of consultation and the changes that have been brought forth and reflected in the revised draft. India has already contributed and will continue to contribute to maintaining the international momentum that has been generated for a timely and effective implementation of the Programme of Action. In addressing regional elements and aspects of this Programme, we feel it is important to take into account regional specificities on the basis of arrangements that meet the interests of the States of the region or the subregion concerned.

The Chairman: Are there any further requests for the floor in terms of explanation of vote? I see none.

The Committee will now proceed to take action on one draft resolution under cluster 8, "Other disarmament measures", namely document A/C.1/58/L.27.

Before taking acton, I give the floor to those delegations wishing to make general statements or to introduce revisions. I see none.

Are there any delegations wishing to express themselves in explanation of vote or position before action is taken? I see none.

The Committee will therefore now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.27.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will proceed to take action on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.27, entitled "Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control".

This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Non-Aligned Movement at the Committee's fourteenth meeting on 23 October 2003. The sponsors of the draft resolution are contained in document A/C.1/58/INF/2.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

United States of America

Abstaining:

France, Israel, Micronesia (Federated States of), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.27 was adopted by 156 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions.

The Chairman: I will now give the floor to those delegations wishing to make an explanation of vote after the vote.

Mr. McGinnis (United States of America): The United States has previously made clear in this Committee that it sees no direct connection between general environmental standards and multilateral arms control agreements. We also remain unconvinced that this draft resolution is relevant to the work of the First Committee.

Nevertheless, in the past, we have abstained on this draft resolution. The United States believes that States parties to bilateral, regional or multilateral arms control and disarmament agreements should take relevant environmental concerns into account when implementing such agreements. The United States Government operates under stringent domestic activities, including the implementation of arms control and disarmament agreements.

Concern for the environment, however, should not lead us to overburden the crucial negotiation phase of crafting an agreement. Such agreements are difficult enough to negotiate without having to take into account factors that are not relevant to their central purpose. In addition, it should not be the role of the United Nations to attempt to set standards for the content of arms control and disarmament agreements.

It is up to the parties to such agreements to choose the provisions by which they are willing to be bound.

This draft resolution has not changed in the last three General Assembly sessions. That suggests to us that draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.27/Rev.1 and its predecessors have not generated progress towards resolving the issues its sponsors wish to address. For this reason and because of our continuing reservations about the appropriateness and utility of this draft resolution, the United States this year has voted "no".

The Chairman: Are there other delegations wishing to make an explanation of vote after the vote? I see none.

I will now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan for a general statement.

Mr. Umer (Pakistan): I have taken the floor to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1, which I understand will be acted on tomorrow.

You would recall that I had introduced the original version of this draft resolution about two weeks ago. At that time we had indicated that we will continue to engage in consultations with all interested parties in order to ensure that this draft resolution, which is an important initiative, enjoys the maximum possible support of this Committee. We conducted those consultations, including one open-ended session, and following those wide-ranging exchanges, we have issued a revised text contained in document A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1. I ask you to bear with me, Sir, to take you through the changes we have introduced in the revised text, in response to the concerns which were expressed by a number of delegations.

In the sixth preambular paragraph, we have brought in the concept of "States concerned". Originally we talked about "dialogue in the regions of tension to avert conflict", but we were advised that such a dialogue has to take place among States. We therefore brought in the concept of States conducting dialogue in the sixth, seventh and eighth preambular paragraphs in order to respond to specific concerns raised by some delegations.

In the operative part of the draft we have made some significant changes. In operative paragraph 1, which refers to non-use of force — a Charter principle — we were reminded that force is allowed under certain circumstances, which we accept. Under Article 51 of the Charter, the use of force is authorized strictly in self-defence. We therefore supplemented the original paragraph 1 by a reference to "the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter". In our assessment, that should adequately take care of any concern with regard to that concept.

In operative paragraph 4, we have also made a significant change. The original draft resolution referred to "compliance with bilateral, regional and international arms control and disarmament agreements". But we were advised that this was not enough and that compliance should be ensured in respect of all types of agreements. We acceded to that request and have now called for strict compliance "with all bilateral, regional and international agreements, including arms control and disarmament

agreements". We hope that this modification will take care of any anxiety on that score.

We heard a lot of views in respect of operative paragraph 5, which encapsulates a very important principle of military balance. We were advised that the original paragraph gave the impression that balance could mean armament, that a State can try to achieve balance, not through disarmament, but by the acquisition of armaments. We have therefore changed that paragraph altogether. Now there is a very clear reference to "the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments", which is a recognized internationally accepted concept, consecrated in various resolutions of the General Assembly, as well as the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Continuing with our description of revisions to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.18, we were advised that in operative paragraph 6 of the original version, in addition to bilateral and regional confidence-building measures, there could be unilateral measures as well. We accepted the logic of that argument and have included the term "unilateral" in operative paragraph 6.

Finally, operative paragraph 7 of the draft was the subject of a number of démarches to our delegation. The substance of those démarches was that the original draft gave a role to the Secretary-General which, it was felt, was too intrusive. We had asked the Secretary-General to consult with Member States. But a view was expressed that even that was a bit too intrusive. Even though we are not personally convinced of this point of view, we have changed the entire structure of operative paragraph 7 simply to achieve maximum possible consensus on this draft resolution. Now, instead of consulting or doing anything else, the Secretary-General has been asked to conduct a routine exercise which we keep entrusting to him, that is "to seek the views of Member States" in order to explore further possibilities of promoting confidence-building measures.

Having demonstrated maximum possible flexibility, Pakistan hopes that when this revised draft is put to a vote tomorrow the same flexibility would be forthcoming from those delegations whose views have been specifically included in this text.

The Chairman: Before adjourning the meeting, I would like to inform you that at its next meeting, tomorrow afternoon, the Committee will continue to take action on the remaining draft resolutions as contained in informal working paper No. 6, which has just been circulated to you.

The draft resolutions that the Committee will act upon tomorrow are, as indicated by informal paper No. 6, as follows: under cluster 1, nuclear weapons, A/C.1/58/L.11, and the amendment to it in A/C.1/58/L.58, as well as A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1 and A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1. Under cluster 4, conventional weapons, we will take action on A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 and under cluster 6, confidence-building measures, including transparency in armaments, we will take action on A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1 and A/C.1/58/L.54/Rev.1.

We will thereafter proceed to cluster 7, disarmament machinery, and take action on A/C.1/58/L.25/Rev.1. Finally, under cluster 10, international security, we will take action on A/C.1/58/L.26.

Delegates, you may have noted by now that if we are indeed able to take action on all eight draft resolutions contained in informal paper No. 6 tomorrow, we will have taken action on 53 out of 54 of the draft resolutions on our agenda. The one remaining draft is contained in document A/C.1/58/L.15.

Of course, I hope that tomorrow we will be faced with a serendipitous situation and be in a position to deal with that remaining draft as well. I certainly hope that this list of draft resolutions to be acted upon will stand tomorrow.

Are there any delegations wishing to take the floor under any other business at this stage? I see none.

The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/58/PV.21

General Assembly

Fifty-eighth session

Official Records

First Committee

21st meeting

Tuesday, 4 November 2003, 2.30 p.m.

New York

Chairman: Mr. Sareva ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 62 to 80 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: This afternoon, the First Committee, in accordance with its programme of work and timetable, will continue with the third phase of its work, namely, action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under agenda items 62 to 80. The Committee will continue today to take decision on draft resolutions that appeared in informal working paper No. 6, which was distributed yesterday, starting again with cluster 1, namely, nuclear weapons.

After completing action on the draft resolutions A/C.1/58/L.11 and an amendment to it in A/C.1/58/L.58 as well as with A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1 and A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1, in cluster 1, the Committee will then proceed to take a decision on draft resolutions A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1 and A/C.1/58/L.54/Rev.1, in cluster 6.

I would like to inform the Committee that, at the request of the sponsors, action on the following draft resolutions has been postponed to Wednesday, 5 November. The resolutions are A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1, L.25/Rev.1 and L.26, contained in clusters 4, 7 and 10, respectively. We will also, at our meeting tomorrow, be taking action on draft resolution L.15/Rev.1.

Delegates, before the Committee proceeds to take decision on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.11 contained in cluster 1, "Nuclear Weapons," I shall give the floor to those delegations wishing to make a general statement other than explanations of vote or to introduce revised draft resolutions.

Mr. Rodriguez-Pantoja (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): The object of my statement is to present the arguments that have led my delegation to present a written amendment to operative paragraphs 2 and 3 of the draft resolution sponsored by Nigeria, in its capacity as president of the African Union, on the "African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba)" (A/C.1/58/L.11).

Spain has always considered nuclear-weapon-free zones, created through arrangements freely arrived at by consensus among the States of a region, as an important contribution to strengthening the non-proliferation regime and to efforts conducive to nuclear disarmament. More specifically, Spain has always stated its unequivocal support for the goals set out in the Pelindaba Treaty as a way to eliminate the presence and prevent the emplacement of nuclear weapons in a continent that is so close to Spain, and its genuine wish that the Treaty enter into force as soon as possible.

As stated in the guidelines adopted by the United Nations Disarmament Commission in its 1999 substantive session on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned,

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. *Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.*

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every zone is the outcome of specific circumstances and must reflect the diversity of situations existing within it. Every nuclear-weapon-free zone must be a well-defined geographical entity.

In this connection, after a very careful consideration of the invitation to join Protocol III of the Treaty of Pelindaba, Spain decided that it was not convenient to sign the Protocol, since such a signature and subsequent ratification would create a redundant nuclear control regime over certain parts of Spanish territory that, according to the Treaty, could fall within the area to which the Treaty is applied. These parts of Spanish territory are already subject to the comprehensive nuclear control established for all Spanish territory by the European Union, NATO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Indeed, those parts of Spanish territory included in the so-called geographical scope of the Treaty are, in their entirety, an integral part of the European Union and therefore part of the process of political integration that it represents. As regards the field of security, they are also a part of NATO's North Atlantic Treaty (Treaty of Washington), the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the 1994 Vienna Document of the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures. Therefore, the aforementioned parts of Spanish territory fall within European Union, NATO and OSCE boundaries and, consequently, should not be included within the area contemplated in the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty.

All Spanish territory was denuclearized by means of the Treaty of Friendship, Defence and Cooperation, signed with the United States in 1976. Such denuclearization has been reiterated in the successive revisions of the said Treaty in 1982, 1988 and 2002. Furthermore, non-acceptance of the introduction, installation or storage of nuclear weapons by NATO in Spanish territory was included in the parliamentary authorization to the Spanish Government to join the North Atlantic Treaty in October 1981. An identical provision, prohibiting the introduction, installation or storage of nuclear weapons in Spanish territory appeared in the consultative referendum held to decide Spain's accession to NATO. There is no intention at all of changing this policy, as proved on the occasion of Spain's full integration into NATO's military structure on 1 January 1999.

All Spanish nuclear facilities, which of course are exclusively devoted to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, are subject to double controls by the IAEA and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), in the framework of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement between the non-nuclear weapon European Union member States and the IAEA. Furthermore, Spain, together with such European Union member States, has ratified the Additional Protocol to the IAEA's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement.

In addition to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Spain has also ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Convention on Nuclear Safety, and it implements IAEA recommendations on nuclear matters.

To sum up, Spain has engaged itself in and abides by obligations that go well beyond those contained in the Pelindaba Treaty.

Spain is also pleased to contribute to IAEA's African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology, which finances projects for peaceful applications of nuclear energy in Africa.

It is worth restating that my country has always considered nuclear-weapon-free zones as important contributions to strengthening international peace and security and that it therefore fully shares the goals set out in the Pelindaba Treaty. That is why Spain has always joined the consensus on the First Committee's resolution on the Treaty since it was first tabled in 1997.

Nevertheless, Spain, as it stated after this resolution's adoption by consensus in 1997, 1999 and 2001, does not consider itself bound by the consensus as it relates to operative paragraph 3, on which it still has serious reservations.

Since 1997, we have tried to persuade the successive sponsors of this resolution of the need to reach a more balanced wording of operative paragraphs 2 and 3. This wording is utterly and clearly discriminatory since it singles out only Spain, out of the six States concerned by the Protocols to the Treaty of Pelindaba — the remaining five countries enjoying the "shield" of operative paragraph 2's broader

formula. In fact, the draft resolution as it stands now — and this year's draft remains unchanged — only targets Spain, in operative paragraph 3, since it does not confer individual responsibility upon each nuclear-weapon State concerned by the Protocols, but only joint responsibility, as in operative paragraph 2.

All the good faith and transparent efforts carried out by Spain since 1997 aimed at a more balanced wording of operative paragraphs 2 and 3 have been in vain. Each are repeated — every two years — unchanged. Such a stalemate is unacceptable.

Notwithstanding the validity of all the above-mentioned arguments, my delegation requests the withdrawal of the amendment that it has presented in order to preserve consensus on such an important issue for my country. We are confident that we can find a solution to the problem that will satisfy our legitimate interests, although the fact that the African Group does not intend to make the promised gesture of a conciliatory statement is not exactly an encouraging sign.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that Spain does not consider itself bound by the above-mentioned consensus as far as operative paragraph 3, on which it has serious reservations, is concerned, and that it will make a statement to this effect after the Committee adopts the draft resolution.

Furthermore, unless an acceptable solution is reached before the First Committee considers the draft resolution in 2005, Spain will not be in a position to join the consensus again.

The Chairman: If no other delegations wish to make general statements, the Committee will proceed to take action on the draft resolutions in cluster I.

Before we take action on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.11, I give the floor to the representative of Germany, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. Heinsberg (Germany): I would like to explain our vote on draft resolutions A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1, "Towards a nuclear-free world: a new agenda" and A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1, "Reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons".

My delegation has been conducting intense discussions with the sponsors of those two draft resolutions. We have done so with a view to being able this year to vote in favour of both draft resolutions. We submitted specific drafting suggestions — suggestions that did not require the sponsors of this year's draft resolutions to walk the extra mile, but only the extra few yards. However, the sponsors did not consider themselves to be in a position to accept the few key amendments that we suggested. That is why it is with a sense of great disappointment that Germany today is not in a position to vote in favour of the two draft resolutions; again, we see no alternative but to abstain.

This is particularly regrettable, because Germany fully shares the commitment to the cause of nuclear disarmament which lies at the heart of the two draft resolutions. We understand the impatience with the pace of progress which pervades the language in, especially, the draft resolution entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: a new agenda". Indeed, all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) must live up to their responsibility to pursue, with determination and continued vigour, the full and effective implementation of the substantial agreement reached at the 2000 Review Conference, and we need renewed efforts to this end.

The Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference spells out 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive implementation of article VI of the NPT. This action programme remains a performance benchmark for the disarmament process. It is of paramount importance that the credibility of this process is maintained at all times, that the process progresses along the lines of the pre-charted course and that it remain irreversible.

The other draft resolution, on non-strategic nuclear weapons, raises an issue which is of particular interest to my country. In order to further the debate in the NPT process, during the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 NPT Review Conference, in 2002, we presented a discussion paper which was specifically devoted to that issue, and we initiated fruitful discussions during the second session of the Preparatory Committee in April this year. As part of the overall process leading to the common goal of the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons, non-strategic nuclear weapons must also be reduced in a verifiable and irreversible manner. However, this goal cannot be achieved in one leap. A gradual, step-by-step approach, starting with ensuring the safety and security

of existing stockpiles and transparency measures, is the only realistic way forward at this juncture.

Let me underline once more the commitment of Germany to an incremental approach leading gradually and inexorably towards the achievement of the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We should devote all our efforts to continued and steady progress in this direction. There is reason for either complacency or undue pessimism.

Mr. Jon Yong Ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I would like to clarify the position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-free world: a new agenda". In previous years, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea voted in favour of the New Agenda Coalition draft resolution, entitled "Towards a nuclear-free world: the need for a new agenda", from the position that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea hopes that the nuclear disarmament issue will be resolved and our planet denuclearized. However, regrettably, the paragraphs on the Korean Peninsula, which were added to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1, do not accurately reflect the status of the nuclear issue between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States.

Furthermore, the draft resolution does not contain a single word about the nuclear threat posed by the United States to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, but instead highlights the unilateral and one-sided demand calling for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — which is subjected to constant nuclear threat from the United States — to give up its own right to self-defence. Such an approach will never contribute to the settlement of the issue.

Accordingly, it has become difficult for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to support the draft resolution as a whole, as we have done in the past. The nuclear issue is, in essence, the result of the hostile policy pursued by the United States aimed at isolating and stifling the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It originates in deep-rooted hostility, which denies the validity of our system, and is a refusal to coexist with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is the general call of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula was our initiative. It is our consistent position, and all Koreans desire its realization.

The United States, however, is standing in its way. It is entirely as a result of the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that we were compelled to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and opt for strengthening our nuclear deterrence capability. If the nuclear issue between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States is to be peacefully settled through dialogue, the United States should make a radical switch in its policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That is the key to, and a precondition for, the settlement of the nuclear issue.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea abides by the principle that the nuclear issue between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States should be settled by means of simultaneous actions. Such actions would provide a realistic way of bringing about the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. My delegation expresses its concern over the reality that it is becoming customary to put pressure on weak and small countries, which are subjected to threats from the super-Power while hesitating to accuse it of its own nuclear threats and acts in violation of international law.

We regret to state that the twentieth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 24 of the draft resolution do not correctly reflect the essence of the issue, ways and means for its settlement or the situation on the Korean Peninsula. For those reasons, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has decided to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1.

The Chairman: Are there other delegations wishing to take the floor in explanation of vote or position before a decision is taken? I see none.

The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.11, entitled "African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba)".

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.11, entitled "African nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty

(Treaty of Pelindaba)". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Nigeria, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States, at the Committee's 14th meeting, on 23 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/58/L.11 and A/C.1/58/INF/2.

The Chairman: The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.11 was adopted.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I now give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on the draft resolution contained in A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1, entitled "Reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Brazil at the Committee's 11th meeting, on 20 October 2003. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/58/L.39 and in documents A/C.1/58/INF/2 and Add.3.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Armenia, Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Micronesia (Federated States of), Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey

Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1 was adopted by 118 votes to 4, with 41 abstentions.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1. We shall vote first on the twentieth preambular paragraph and then on the draft resolution as a whole.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I give the floor to the representative of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea on a point of order.

Mr. Jon Yong Ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation did not request a vote on the twentieth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution on the Korean Peninsula.

The Chairman: The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is correct; the delegation of that country did not request a recorded vote on the twentieth preambular paragraph.

Mr. Jon Yong Ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): We should like to know which delegation requested this vote.

The Chairman: A recorded vote was requested by another delegation. However, in conformity with established practice, the Chair is not in a position to divulge information as to which delegation it was.

I give the floor to the representative of China on a point of order.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): We should like to know the content of the twentieth preambular paragraph. There is a certain amount of confusion in that regard.

The Chairman: I give the floor to the representative of Pakistan on a point of order.

Mr. Umer (Pakistan): I think the representative of China made a very valid point. If I am correct — and I hope I am — the twentieth preambular paragraph begins "Expressing concern that the development defences" and ends "to the weaponization of outer space". Has someone requested a vote on this paragraph?

The Chairman: The representative of Pakistan is correct. The twentieth preambular paragraph is the one from which he just quoted:

> "Expressing concern that the development of missile defences could impact negatively on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and lead to a new arms race on earth and in outer space."

The Chairman: I now give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will proceed to take action on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: a new agenda". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Brazil at the Committee's 11th meeting, on 20 October 2003. The sponsors of the draft resolution are contained in documents A/C.1/58/L.40 and A/C.1/58/INF/2, Add.3 and Add.5.

The Committee will first proceed to take action on the twentieth preambular paragraph. I shall read out the paragraph:

> "Expressing concern that the development of missile defences could impact negatively on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and lead to a new arms race on earth and in outer space."

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Israel, Japan, Micronesia (Federated States of), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus,

Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey

The twentieth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1 was retained by 117 votes to 6, with 39 abstentions.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1 as a whole.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

France, India, Israel, Pakistan, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Micronesia (Federated States of), Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey

Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1 was adopted by 121 votes to 6, with 38 abstentions.

The Chairman: I now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the draft resolutions just adopted.

Mr. Meyer (Canada): I have asked for the floor to explain the position of the Government of Canada on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: a new agenda".

Canada is pleased to have again supported the draft resolution, and shares strongly the attachment of the New Agenda Coalition to the 13 practical steps towards nuclear disarmament agreed by all States parties at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In Canada's view, taking the 13 practical steps remains an urgent matter for the international community in order to implement article VI of the NPT. Canada did, however, call for a vote on the twentieth preambular paragraph, and abstained in that vote, because my Government is of the view that current developments in missile defences do not presume a negative impact on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Given the new threat of the proliferation of missiles and weapons of mass destruction that the international community faces, we believe that cooperation in this area could complement non-proliferation efforts.

As was the case last year, our vote of support for the draft resolution reflects Canada's longstanding nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation policies and practices, and is consistent with our commitment to the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, whose cornerstone is the near-universal norm established under the NPT.

Mr. Rodriguez-Pantoja (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): As we made clear in our statements of 1997, 1999 and 2001, Spain does not consider itself bound by the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.11 as far as operative paragraph 3 is concerned, with regard to which it has serious reservations, for the reasons given earlier — which we need not repeat — during consideration of the amendments put forward by my country to operative paragraphs 2 and 3 and which were later withdrawn in order to preserve the consensus.

Mr. Trezza (Italy): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.11, entitled "African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba)". The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia align themselves with this statement in explanation of vote. The associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, also align themselves with the statement.

The EU attaches great importance to the development and strengthening, wherever possible, of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, based on arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region. The nuclear-weapon-free zones enhance regional and global peace and security and are a means to promote nuclear disarmament, stability and confidence.

We welcome and support the signature and ratification by the nuclear-weapon States of the relevant protocols on nuclear-weapon-free zones and look forward to the entry into force of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty at an early date. The European Union therefore welcomes the efforts undertaken this year in the First Committee to preserve consensus on the draft resolution, and is satisfied that this has been the case.

Nevertheless, as contemplated in the guidelines adopted by the Disarmament Commission at its 1999 substantive session on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, every zone is the outcome of specific circumstances and must reflect the diversity of situations existing within it. Every nuclear-weapon-free zone must be a well-defined geographical entity. The EU shares Spain's legitimate concern not to be singled out in the draft resolution. The EU calls upon the parties concerned to resume their efforts to find a solution acceptable to all that takes into account the specific circumstances and the diversity of the situation existing within the area of application of the Treaty.

Mr. McGinnis (United States of America): The United States would like to support the statement made earlier by Spain, as well as that just made on behalf of the European Union, concerning draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.11, entitled "African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba)".

The United States believes that Spain has a legitimate objection to being singled out in operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution. Furthermore, the United States believes that Spain has a legitimate concern about the status of its national territory that the Pelindaba Treaty defines as falling within its area of application.

These issues must be addressed. The United States therefore strongly urges the concerned parties to establish quickly an effective process for resolving their differences with a view to finding a solution to these long-standing problems that takes into account the specific circumstances and the diversity of the existing situation within the area of application of the Treaty before the Pelindaba draft resolution is again considered by the First Committee. The effects of doing so can only be beneficial for the Treaty of Pelindaba and the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone that it seeks to establish.

Mr. Varma (India): My delegation has requested the floor to explain its vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: a new agenda". India believes that the only consensus document of the international community as a whole on this issue is the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament. It contains

a Programme of Action which remains only partially implemented. India believes that any agenda for the future would have to take into account, as the starting premise, the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted at that special session. It is evident that that the international community has achieved little progress on the most important element, which is nuclear disarmament. This raises the question of whether there is a need for a new agenda at all. The most important element in the existing agenda remains valid, but is yet to be accomplished.

The draft resolution, cast in the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), includes extraneous elements and formulations that have been adopted in other forums. We reject prescriptive approaches to security, such as those set out in the eighteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 20, 22 and 23, as they are not relevant to the draft resolution and do not reflect the realities on the ground.

India has already exercised its nuclear option, and is a nuclear-weapon State with a minimum credible nuclear deterrent. It is not a conferment of status that we seek — nor is such status something for others to grant. This is a reality that cannot be denied, a reality that has to be factored into any agenda that seeks to be realistic.

The reference in paragraph 22 to a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia not only borders on the unreal, but also calls into question one of the fundamental guiding principles for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, namely, that arrangements for such zones should be freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned. That principle was again endorsed by consensus in the Disarmament Commission guidelines. As we have stated on other occasions, given current realities, the proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia is no more valid than a proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in East Asia, Western Europe or North America would be.

My delegation's views on the Non-Proliferation Treaty are well known. We sympathize with those States parties that have been striving in vain over the years to get the five nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT to accept concrete steps towards nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The draft resolution is silent on the multifarious sources of proliferation, which the NPT has failed to stem.

We believe that all such efforts, however energetic, would be limited by the intrinsic inequality and the discriminatory framework of the obligations enshrined in the NPT. As we have stated before, a new agenda cannot succeed in the old framework of the NPT. There is a need to move beyond the old framework towards a durable system of international security based on the principle of equal and legitimate security for all.

My delegation also shares the objectives of the total elimination of nuclear weapons and endorses the need to work for a nuclear-weapon-free world. However, we remain unconvinced about the utility of an exercise bound by the flawed and discriminatory approaches of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We therefore cast a negative vote on the draft resolution as a whole.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to explain its vote on draft resolutions A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1 and A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1, China has always advocated the complete prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons, including, naturally, nuclear weapons of all kinds. However, both the concept and the definition of non-strategic nuclear weapons, as referred to in the draft resolution, are unclear. The Chinese delegation did not, therefore, participate in the voting on the draft resolution.

With regard to A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1, the Chinese delegation voted in favour, because we support its main thrust, objectives and content with regard to promoting nuclear disarmament and bringing about a nuclear-weapon-free world at an early date. At the same time, we are of the view that all nuclear-weapon States should undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons — that is essential to the realization of total nuclear disarmament. Transparency on nuclear weapons should be considered in the context of an international environment of peace, stability and trust, and should be discussed and resolved in the process of nuclear disarmament negotiations. The definition of non-strategic nuclear weapons lacks clarity. We therefore have reservations about that part of the draft resolution.

Mr. McGinnis (United States of America): I would like to provide an explanation of my delegation's negative vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1, "Reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons". Although France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland do not have non-strategic nuclear weapons in their arsenals, their delegations wish to be associated with this statement. Our three countries cannot support this draft resolution because it still fails to take into account efforts already under way to address the concerns underlying the draft resolution. Nor does it recognize that alternative approaches have already borne fruit. By bringing this issue into the United Nations arena and by continuing to insist on a formalized approach to it, draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1 risks complicating and interfering with efforts that we believe will be more productive.

As we have pointed out many times before, the types and number of NATO sub-strategic nuclear forces have been reduced since 1991 by approximately 85 per cent, including through the elimination of entire categories of weapons. The United States has also completed its implementation of the pledges, which included non-strategic nuclear weapons, that it made in the 1991 presidential nuclear initiative undertaken in parallel with the Russian Federation. All this was accomplished without a formal arms control agreement. A formal arms control approach to non-strategic nuclear weapons, as called for in draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1, would present problems of definition and fundamental verification, issues of access to sensitive facilities, vast force-level asymmetries and other major obstacles.

NATO has proposed nuclear confidence-building measures in the NATO-Russia Council, including measures to enhance non-strategic nuclear weapon transparency. The United States is also pressing, in the context of the bilateral United States-Russian Consultative Group for Strategic Security, for transparency aimed at increasing openness and predictability and reducing uncertainty. We believe that such approaches, rather than those called for in draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1, will prove most effective in dealing with non-strategic nuclear weapons.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like, in fairly great detail, to explain the reasons for the vote of the Russian Federation on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.39 and A/C.1/58/L.40.

The Russian Federation is faithful to its commitments in the area of the reduction and limitation of nuclear weapons, and it is reaffirming this through practical steps. Over recent decades, as a result of the implementation of an entire series of treaties, the Russian Federation is conducting deep and irreversible reductions in nuclear weapons. An entire class of non-strategic nuclear weapons has been eliminated — medium and short-range missiles.

In accordance with the treaty included on our initiative, which has entered into force, namely, the Moscow Treaty, Russia will continue reductions of strategic offensive weapons, having reduced on a reciprocal basis with the United States the number of its strategic nuclear warheads by a factor of three. Russia has presented detailed information on the course of the continuing successful implementation of unilateral initiatives in 1991 to 1992, regarding non-strategic nuclear weapons at the first and second sessions of the preparatory committee of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference of 2005.

The process of the reduction of nuclear arsenals, inter alia non-strategic nuclear weapons, is being conducted in Russia systematically and consistently, in accordance with the federal programme targeted for the elimination and disposal of nuclear warheads.

Tactical nuclear weapons, as any other types of nuclear weapons, form a complex system, protected in numerous ways from accidental or unintentional use. Throughout Russia's entire history, there have never been any breakdowns in the reliable storage of nuclear weapons. In recent years, the Russian Federation has undertaken additional important measures to ensure highly reliable and secure storage and treatment of nuclear weapons. Everything possible has been done to prevent the unauthorized access to these weapons.

All of this attests, in fact, to the readiness of Russia to implement the commitments it had undertaken — inter alia, under article 6 of the NPT — and to respond adequately to new dangers and challenges, and has a direct bearing on those reasons for which the Russian delegation voted against draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1. Last year, we abstained from voting on the draft of this resolution since, in our view, it was insufficiently precise and did

not reflect realistically enough the true picture in the area under consideration. This referred both to an underestimation of measures and steps undertaken in the area of the reduction of this type of nuclear weapons and to the objective difficulties that are complicating the achievement of such rapid and radical results as those at which the draft resolution is aimed.

Unfortunately, the present draft not only fails to take into account the views that we expressed earlier, but a number of additional provisions have emerged which also call forth questions. As we have already noted, the draft once again fails to take into account divergences in the views of States regarding the fact as to how, in principle, we should treat non-strategic nuclear weapons. Such divergences exist even in the texts of the presidential initiatives of 1991 and 1992 of the USSR, Russia and the United States. For example, there are nuclear weapons that could be categorized both as strategic and as non-strategic. Therefore, the very subject of what is being proposed for agreement is not clear. And this is a key and fundamental point. We cannot fail to mention as well the differences in the roles that different States are assigning to non-strategic nuclear weapons and their policies in the area of national security.

I note in this connection that, as regards all of its nuclear weapons, Russia has concentrated solely on its own territory and that it is under reliable control. The President of the Russian Federation has called upon other nuclear States to do the same thing. The significance of such a step for the reduction of many risks, including those of security and non-proliferation, are obvious.

The draft, unfortunately, passes over this subject in silence. It is also not clear as to whether it is in fact possible at all to consider non-strategic nuclear weapons in isolation from other steps in the area of disarmament. I will recall here that measures regarding tactical nuclear weapons in the presidential initiative of 1991 to 1992 form an integral part of a broad plan of action covering strategic offensive weapons, chemical and biological weapons and conventional and other weapons. There are also other basic questions, and without answers to them, the inclusion in the draft resolution of such categorical and far-ranging wording as is in this draft seems to us unjustified.

We understand the wish of the sponsors of the present draft to accelerate progress towards reduction and limitation of nuclear weapons. It is difficult, however, to agree with the ways in which proposals are being made to achieve this goal. The draft proposes the adoption of a number of new and specific commitments that are not mentioned either in the unilateral initiatives of 1991-1992 or in the recommendations of the final document of the NPT Review Conference of 2000. We would not like to be responsible for commitments that have not been undertaken, and even less for specific timetables and dates to which the adoption of such commitments could be tied in advance. Resolutions that we adopt must open the way to the achievement of practical results. Unfortunately, the draft resolution, in our view, is not fully in keeping with this objective.

We would also like to clarify the reasons for our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.40, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free-world: a new agenda". The Russian Federation shares many of the views and the specific provisions contained in this document and considers them important. Such is the case, for example, with the provisions that take note of the close link between strategic, offensive and defensive weapons. In these provisions, there is an expression of support for the NPT and mention is made of the concerns regarding the situation surrounding the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and of the importance of preventing the weaponization of outer space.

We welcome the call for the speedy commencement of negotiations for the ban on the production of fissile materials, for nuclear weapons and for other nuclear explosive devices and we believe that the future treaty for a ban on the production of fissile material will become an important measure for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

At the same time, the draft contains provisions that we consider as untimely and incapable of leading to practical results. We are speaking here primarily of the selective reproduction in it of part of the provisions from the draft of another draft resolution, "Reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons" (A/C.1/58/L.39/Rev.1). In fact, it is hard to explain the need to repeat the text of one draft resolution within another. This does not enhance arguments in favour of the importance of the subject and may be counter-productive. On this issue, we have just had an opportunity to state in detail some of our concerns and, in that respect, Russia has found it possible to abstain in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1.

Allow me once again to assure you that the Russian Federation is already in accordance with the commitments it has undertaken to follow the path of nuclear disarmament and strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The Russian Federation supports and will continue to support realistic and balanced decisions in this area.

Mr. Broucher (United Kingdom): I am taking the floor on behalf of the United Kingdom, the United States and France to explain our vote against draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.40, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free-world: a new agenda".

As we stated in our explanation of vote on this draft resolution last year, the United Kingdom, the United States and France remain fully committed to meeting our obligations under article 6 of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We support nuclear weapons reductions. But, unfortunately, this draft resolution contains elements not included in the 1995 and 2000 NPT final documents, and does not take sufficient account of the progress that has been made in nuclear weapons reductions since 2000.

Although it now acknowledges the Moscow Treaty, it goes on to imply that this is not yet an effective nuclear disarmament measure, this despite the fact that the treaty commits the United States and Russia to reduce their nuclear arsenals by several thousand warheads over the next decade. We have many other concerns about this draft resolution and would have been prepared to address them with the sponsors, had they approached us in a receptive spirit.

Our nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation commitments remain steadfast and rooted in the NPT. The present NPT review process is making progress. As we turn our attention to the Preparatory Committee for the Third Review Conference here in New York in the spring, we hope that ongoing dialogue among States parties will help ensure that the process will lead to the further strengthening of this cornerstone of the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

Mr. Rivas (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free-world: a new agenda", which we have just voted on, and, specifically, the twelfth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 5 and 7 concerning the complete reduction of nuclear weapons, Colombia reiterates what was said in its explanation of vote concerning draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.52.

In conformity with international law and with Colombia's political constitution, the obligations contracted in these treaties and signed by our countries can only enter into force from the time that they are ratified. Colombia has presented these arguments publicly and transparently for three years before the technical secretariat of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization as well as the preparatory committee of review of the Treaty and its subsidiary organs.

During the last conference on measures to facilitate the entry into force of the Treaty in Vienna last September, Colombia reaffirmed once more its commitment to the Treaty and proposed to overcome its constitutional obstacles in order to make contributions to the preparatory committee before ratifying the Treaty. We are thankful for the interest of the various participating States in finding a solution to these obstacles. Such a solution would permit us to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible, as we wish to do.

With regard to our concrete proposal, the States participating proposed that we should continue our discussions in the context of the preparatory committee of the Treaty and its subsidiary organs. We hope that these discussions, along with the provisional technical secretariat, will produce a prompt solution to the problem that Colombia has in being able to ratify the Treaty.

Mr. Ogawa (Japan): I would like to explain Japan's abstention in the voting on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.40, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free-world: a new agenda".

It is Japan's fervent desire that nuclear devastation should not be repeated and that continuous efforts should be made towards achieving a peaceful and safe world, free of nuclear weapons. In this regard, Japan shares the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons with the sponsors of this draft resolution. We are also of the view that draft contains many elements that we believe are useful and agreeable.

At the same time, Japan firmly believes that steps for nuclear disarmament should be realistic and progressive. In this context, it is imperative to take into consideration the different interests and concerns of a

wide range of countries in the international community. In addition, Japan is of the view that there are some elements in the draft resolution of which it is not completely convinced, such as the description on missile difference.

More careful examinations are required on these issues and therefore we abstained in the vote on this draft resolution.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I am taking the floor to explain our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.40. We have voted against this draft resolution, and we have done so with a certain degree of diffidence, because the text of this draft includes a number of very important and valuable concepts.

The title of the draft resolution itself is a very appropriate one. It calls for a world without nuclear weapons, an objective with which we, like the rest of the international community, support entirely. Similarly, in the preamble and the operative parts of this draft resolution, there are some extremely important ideas, for example, the conviction that the retention of nuclear weapons carries the risk of proliferation and the possibility of these weapons falling into the hands of terrorists or non-State actors. We fully subscribe to this view. In our explanation of vote on the draft resolution pertaining to terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, this is exactly the point that we made — that we want to ensure that these weapons are not acquired by non-State actors. The best assurance for that is to eliminate them all — total and complete disarmament. Again, this is the concept that non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament are mutually reinforcing processes and that, for the promotion of non-proliferation, progress in the reduction of nuclear arms is essential to this very important concept, to which Pakistan subscribes fully.

We are also very impressed by the declaration in this draft resolution that the participation of the international community as a whole, and I underline the term "as a whole", is central to the maintenance and enhancement of international peace and stability, I think, in this day and age. This is an extremely valuable concept. The maintenance of international peace and security is a global responsibility, not that of limited group of countries, but an undiluted and total international responsibility. So this is a concept, I think, which needs full and total endorsement.

But despite these extremely useful ideas in this draft resolution, we were obliged to vote against it for reasons that should be familiar to everyone and which are, of course, reflected in the eighteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 20, 22 and 23. Now, our problem with this is that there is, of course, a certain reality in our part of the world in which Pakistan has acquired nuclear weapons. We have nuclear capability. This particular aspect of the resolution, these three or four paragraphs, do not recognize that reality. But worse than that, they do not recognize the factors that prompted Pakistan to acquire nuclear weapons. They make a general equation of two or three countries, which, to our mind, is absolutely incorrect. We were not the first ones to acquire nuclear weapons. For 20 years, we had advocated a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. We had called for a number of measures that would have ensured the non-nuclearization of our region. But that did not happen. The Committee knows the circumstances under which Pakistan was forced, literally, to acquire an overt nuclear capability for self-defence and strategic balance. These three paragraphs do not take this reality, which is known to everyone, into account.

So it was for these reasons and despite, as I said, the fact that we are very strongly attached to a number of concepts in this draft resolution that Pakistan regretfully had to vote against it.

Mr. Shaw (Australia): I take the floor to provide an explanation of vote on the two draft resolutions, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free-world: a new agenda" (A/C.1/58/L.40) and "Reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons" (A/C.1/58/L.39).

The proliferation of nuclear weapons remains one of the most serious challenges to global peace and security. Australia, as a non-nuclear-weapon State, is therefore strongly committed to efforts to curb the spread of such weapons and to advance the goal of nuclear disarmament. In working to achieve nuclear disarmament, Australia supports practical, realistic proposals capable of winning wide support, including, in particular, the support of the nuclear-weapon States. It is our view that, through this type of inclusive approach, further progress will be made in ridding the world of all types of nuclear weapons. Therefore, while there are many elements in the new draft resolutions that Australia could support, we have significant reservations on others.

[illegible] also concerned that the draft resolution on the reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, document A/C.1/58/L.39, does not acknowledge either the substantive progress that has been made over the last decade in reducing these types of weapons nor the ongoing efforts. For these reasons, Australia had, unfortunately, to abstain in the vote on the two draft resolutions.

The Chairman: That concludes the list of speakers in explanation of vote after the vote. Are there any others? I see none.

We have now concluded our consideration of cluster 1, "Nuclear weapons", not only for today's meeting, but for this session as a whole. We have also previously completed our consideration of clusters 2 and 3 as well as cluster 5.

We will now proceed to the two drafts that we have under cluster 6, "Confidence-building measures, including transparency in armaments", contained in documents A/C.1/58/L.18 and A/C.1/58/L.54.

Before proceeding to take action, I give the floor to those delegations wishing to make general statements other than explanations of vote or to introduce revised draft resolutions.

I have one speaker on my list, the representative of the Central African Republic.

Mr. Poukré-Kono (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): As the Assembly must take a decision on A/C.1/58/L.54/Rev.1, it is useful to mention that the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa has made some significant progress in modifying the text. This is in regards to the organization, in Franceville, Gabon, from 21 to 28 July 2003 of the peacekeeping military exercise called "Biyongo 2003" and the recent holding, in Malabo in Equatorial Guinea, of the twentieth ministerial meeting of the Committee, which took place from 27 to 31 October 2003.

These relevant events, indicated in operative paragraph 4, will assist the work of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, which should be recognized and supported.

Moreover, I would like to draw the attention of the committee to the spelling of the name "Biyongo", which should be written and pronounced "Biyongo". The wrong spelling is to be found in section (d) of operative paragraph 4.

The Chairman: Due note will be taken of the correct spelling just indicated.

Are there other delegations wishing to make general statements before we proceed to take action?

If not, I now give the floor to those delegations wishing to express themselves in explanation of vote or position before a decision is taken.

Mr. Varma (India): The Indian delegation has requested the floor to explain its vote before the vote on the draft resolution entitled "Confidence-building measures in the regional and sub-regional context" (A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1).

This draft resolution has gone through some revision. In informal consultations, we had conveyed several concerns that we had with draft resolution L.18 as well as with L.18/Rev.1. Though the sponsor of the draft resolution has gone through the motions of taking on board suggestions made by delegations, including ours, the core objective of the draft remains unchanged. This consists of using confidence-building measures as a vehicle for introducing vague notions of the regions of tension and military balance and for dragging the United Nations Secretary-General into an ambiguous role under questionable motivations. It is indeed a pity that the very important subject of confidence-building measures, which enjoys broad support, including that of India, is being brought to the First Committee under dubious conditions in this draft resolution.

There is a distortion of the accepted use of confidence-building measures, as commonly agreed in consensus documents of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. In fact, this draft resolution is silent on the invaluable contributions made by the Commission. It betrays a lack of understanding of all the systematic labour and sincerity of the real practitioners of confidence-building measures that have made a difference on the ground.

Confidence-building measures need sustained dialogue and application in order to be useful and productive. They comprise a gradual process to create a positive atmosphere in difficult conditions. Engaging into confidence-building measures presupposes the good faith of the parties concerned for increasing space for peace, which is inconceivable when dialogue and confidence-building measures are treated as a cloak to

hide the intent to change the status quo. Similarly, confidence-building measures cannot be a subterfuge to get a whole host of non-parties to a dispute involved in the process.

The draft resolution suffers from these drawbacks and effects only a travesty of confidence-building measures. The draft resolution tries to fuse selective quotes from the Charter with concepts and notions that have no place in any consensus document that would bring us all together in the First Committee. An entirely artificial construct of regions of tension is advanced in paragraph 7 to assign a role to the Secretary-General beyond what is ascribed to him in the Charter or by established practice. Moreover, involving non-parties to a dispute may be a recipe for wrecking, rather than building, confidence in particular situations. Paragraph 7 would create a bad precedent in our deliberations, exacerbate contentious issues and knock the bottom out of the confidence-building-measure option being implemented in practice.

By prescribing military balance between States in the regions of tension, the draft resolution unrealistic demands on diverse States of various sizes and security requirements. Such balance is intended to justify a quest for the sterile concept of parity derived from the cold war. In fact, the total absence of any reference to threats posed by international terrorism or by terrorists acquiring weapons of mass destruction typifies the anachronistic approach of the draft resolution.

The draft resolution is unacceptable to India both in its objectives and in its content. We will therefore cast a negative vote to reject its premise and its intended outcome, and the use of its content, piecemeal or as a whole, with regard to other areas of interest in the First Committee.

Mrs. Martinic (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation has asked for the floor to explain its abstention in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1 on conference-building measures in the regional and subregional context. In our opinion, the draft resolution contains valuable elements that we believe are of interest in the context of the General Assembly debate on the prevention of armed conflict. As is well known, Argentina, on the basis of its own experience, is an enthusiastic advocate of confidence-building measures. Unfortunately, the draft resolution under consideration does not fully reflect the consensus on these measures attained in the Disarmament Commission in the past and reflected in document A/51/182/Rev.1.

Furthermore, the draft resolution does not do justice to the work done by the Disarmament Commission on this issue during its most recent three sessions. It is worth recalling that the vast majority of Member States have agreed that those measures can make a positive contribution to international peace and security and to the prevention of armed conflict. That is why, regrettably, we are obliged to abstain in the vote on the draft resolution.

Mr. McGinnis (United States of America): It is with regret that my delegation is compelled to vote against a draft resolution dealing with confidence-building measures. I am referring to draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1, entitled "Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context".

The United States places particular value on the role that confidence-building measures can play in establishing an atmosphere of trust, cooperation and renewed optimism among States long distrustful of one another. We would have been pleased to support a well-crafted draft resolution on the issue in this Committee. Unfortunately, the draft before us, although revised, remains seriously flawed. It asserts principles which have little to do with confidence-building measures and with which we do not agree. The text fails to take account of the considerable body of established principles on confidence-building measures and the broad convergence of views on how they are best employed, as reflected most recently in the Disarmament Commission's work on this issue. Most important, the draft resolution seems to run counter to the very spirit of mutual and voluntary accommodation that gives confidence-building measures their power.

Allow me to be absolutely clear: my delegation does not believe that our vote on this draft resolution should be mistaken to signal a choosing of sides on the various disputes between India and Pakistan. Our negative vote will represent our rejection of an approach that distorts a principle: that is, the confidence-building measures that we hold dear.

Many delegates will recall that it was just such an approach that helped produce a failure by the Disarmament Commission to produce an agreed document on conventional confidence-building measures after three years of what seemed up to that time to be productive effort.

My delegation has expressed, throughout this session of the First Committee, our deep concern that multilateral disarmament institutions will become evermore irrelevant if we cannot find ways to refocus our efforts to address the urgent security challenges before us. If the Committee endorses this draft resolution, we shall be voting to burden ourselves with yet another perennial resolution whose underlying purpose is to bring a bilateral dispute into this body. We urge delegations to consider whether this represents the best use of our time and energy in this Committee, and then to join with us in opposing the draft resolution.

The Chairman: If no other delegation wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting, the Committee will proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritius, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Benin, Canada, Central African Republic, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Fiji, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, South Africa, Swaziland, Turkey, Uruguay, Vanuatu

Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1 was adopted by 68 votes to 47, with 34 abstentions.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.54/Rev.1. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.54/Rev.1, entitled "Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa", under agenda item 74, "Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly".

The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of the Central African Republic at the 13th meeting, on 22 October 2003. A list of the sponsors is contained in document A/C.1/58/L.54/Rev.1.

In connection with the draft resolution, I wish to put on record the following statement on the financial implications. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 6 to 11, 15 and 16 of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.54/Rev.1, the General Assembly would welcome the creation of a mechanism for the promotion, maintenance and consolidation of peace and security in Central Africa, to be known as the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa, by the Conference of the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the Economic Community of Central African States, held at Yaoundé on 25 February 1999, and would request the Secretary-General to give his full support to the effective realization of that important mechanism.

The draft resolution emphasizes the need to make the early-warning mechanism in Central Africa operational so that will serve, on the one hand, as an instrument for analysing and monitoring the political situation in the States members of the Standing Advisory Committee with a view to preventing the outbreak of future armed conflict and, on the other hand, as a technical body through which the member States will carry out the programme of work of the Committee, adopted at its organizational meeting held at Yaoundé in 1992, and requests the Secretary-General to provide it with the assistance necessary for it to function properly.

It requests the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue to provide their full assistance for the proper functioning of the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa. It requests the Secretary-General, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1197 (1998), to provide the States members of the Standing Advisory Committee with the necessary support for the implementation and smooth functioning of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa and the early-warning mechanism.

It also requests the Secretary-General to support the establishment of a network of parliamentarians with a view to the creation of a subregional parliament in Central Africa. It requests the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to continue to provide increased assistance to the countries of Central Africa for coping with the problems of refugees and displaced persons in their territories.

The draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide the States members of the Standing Advisory Committee with assistance to ensure that they are able to carry on their efforts. It also requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

The activities of the Standing Advisory Committee, including those related to the implementation and functioning of the early-warning mechanism and the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa referred to in paragraph 6, 7 and 9, and those related to the establishment of a network of parliamentarians, referred to in paragraph 10 of the draft resolution, are expected to be funded by voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

Provision for the implementation of activities relating to the request contained in paragraph 8 of the draft resolution regarding assistance for the proper functioning of the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa has been made in the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005, under section 24, Human rights.

Provision for the implementation of activities relating to the request contained in paragraph 11 of the draft resolution regarding increased assistance to the countries of Central Africa for coping with the problems of refugees and displaced persons in their territories would be subject to the availability of voluntary contributions to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Implementation of the requests contained in paragraphs 15 and 16 regarding the provision of assistance to States members of the Committee and the submission of a report to the General Assembly would be carried out within the resources provided for under section 4, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005. Therefore, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.54/Rev.1, no additional requirements would arise in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.54/Rev.1 have expressed the wish that the draft resolution be adopted without a vote. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.54/Rev.1 was adopted.

The Chairman: I shall now call on those representatives wishing to speak in explanation of vote or position on the draft resolutions just adopted.

Mr. Trezza (Italy): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1, entitled "Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context". The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia align themselves with this explanation of vote. The associated countries Bulgaria and Romania and the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area

Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway also align themselves with this explanation of vote.

The EU strongly supports the establishment of confidence- and security-building measures as an instrument to overcome mistrust, misunderstanding and miscalculation, especially in situations and areas of tension. European countries have greatly benefited from the confidence-building measures and the confidence- and security-building measures which were introduced in Europe, in particular through the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe/Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe process. The EU therefore favours the principle of introducing similar concepts into other areas of the world, especially areas of tension, and of adapting them to specific local or regional situations.

The EU therefore could accept some elements of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1, on confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context, but it cannot ignore the outcome of the debate which took place on this same subject in the Disarmament Commission just a few months ago.

Moreover, in our view, some provisions of the draft resolution seem to reflect national views with regard to a specific area of tension which are not in line with an overall and balanced approach. The concept of military balance between States in regions of tension, which is not in itself a confidence-building measure, and the request for the involvement of the Secretary-General with the States of the regions concerned, acquire special meaning if applied to the context of specific geographic areas. Some EU member States brought these concerns to the attention of the sponsors, but they were not adequately taken into account.

The EU believes that the text of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1 is not balanced and therefore expressed a negative vote. That vote does not in any way imply taking a political position on any particular regional issue.

Mr. Duarte (Brazil): Brazil voted in favour of the draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.18 concerning confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context. We support the general thrust of the draft resolution because we consider that confidence-building measures are a powerful instrument for generating trust among countries in all regions. Their implementation has a positive impact on the consolidation of a more cooperative environment, essential to the full development of national and regional potential. Confidence-building measures should imposed or monitored in no way by any actor other than the countries that voluntarily engage in the exercise.

That is confirmed by Brazilian bilateral, regional and multilateral experiences in this field. In our hemisphere, Brazil is the country that has consistently registered the largest number of confidence-building measures in the appropriate mechanism within the Organization of American States.

My delegation supported the draft in spite the fact that we are not comfortable with some of the language included in the text, although we recognize the effort made by the Pakistani delegation to accommodate some of the concerns raised by several delegations, including ours. We still consider that the text might have been refined in order to attain the consensus that the initiative deserved.

We hope we can work further with the Pakistani delegation to reach consensus on this important initiative. To our strong disappointment, at this year's session of the Disarmament Commission, consensus inexplicably eluded us at the very last minute of the three-year exercise we embarked on in the Commission to deal with confidence-building measures.

Mr. Udedibia (Nigeria): I have asked for the floor to explain Nigeria's vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1, entitled "Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context".

Nigeria attaches great importance to confidence-building measures in the maintenance of international peace and security. However, to my delegation the core of paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, concerning the maintenance of military balance between States in the regions of tension and conflict in the acquisition, development and deployment of conventional and strategic weapons systems, is not possible to realize. Nigeria does not believe that such a measure will promote confidence-building among States.

For that reason, my delegation abstained in the voting on the draft resolution.

Mr. Shaimerdenov (Kazakhstan): I have taken the floor to explain our position on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1, entitled "Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context".

First, I would like to thank the delegation of Pakistan for presenting the draft resolution on this

important issue and for its flexibility during the consultations on the initial draft.

More than 10 years ago, Kazakhstan launched the initiative on the creation of a comprehensive security structure in Asia, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA). The first CICA summit was held in Kazakhstan in June last year. Today, the countries participants in the process continue to work on practical implementation of the documents adopted at the Almaty summit: the Almaty Act and the CICA Declaration on eliminating terrorism and promoting dialogue among civilizations.

Confidence-building measures are an important aspect of global stability. At the same time, we strongly believe that confidence-building measure processes can be successful only through complete consensus among member States, which today, unfortunately, has not been reached.

It is for that reason that my delegation abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.18/Rev.1. My delegation expresses its readiness to continue its work with other delegations in order to reach a comprehensive agreement on this important issue.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Pakistan to make a general statement.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): It is with some regret that I have asked for the floor. I have asked for the floor to respond in particular to two statements which I have heard this afternoon and with which I must express strong disagreement. The two statements related to the draft resolution just adopted on confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context.

That initiative was taken by Pakistan with the best of intentions and the desire to promote a process of peace and security in South Asia. The contents of the draft resolution, contrary to what has been stated here by some of my colleagues, are completely aligned with the decisions and positions adopted by the General Assembly and other international organizations at various stages.

Let me ask my colleagues to look at the text of the draft resolution, rather than at the sponsor of the draft resolution. The draft resolution calls for the settlement of disputes by peaceful means. It recalls Security Council resolutions. It underlines the importance of confidence-building measures. It asks that resources released through disarmament be devoted to economic and social development. It recognizes the need for —

The Chairman: I call on the representative of India on a point of order.

Mr. Varma (India): Of course, I do not wish to stand in the way of a statement being made from the floor by the Ambassador of Pakistan, but I do wish to seek a clarification from you, Sir, in terms of a point of order concerning the purpose for which this particular segment has been allotted.

We have given time for delegations to make known their general positions and here we have the Ambassador of Pakistan referring to his own draft resolution, which has just been adopted. He has the status of the sponsor of the draft resolution. Is it your ruling, Sir, that he has the right to make direct references to the draft resolution that has been adopted?

If that is so, it would be the first occasion at this session of the First Committee that this segment and allotment of time for delegations to make statements has been put to that use. It is, in our view, a modification of our understanding of how this segment and the time allotted should be made use of. However, we will abide by your decision, Sir.

The Chairman: Indeed, the procedure that we follow is that those delegations wishing to make general statements other than explanations of vote or to introduce revised draft resolutions will speak first. I have given the floor on previous occasions to delegations wishing to make a general statement afterwards when that has been necessary.

As members well know, sponsors of draft resolutions are not supposed to give an explanation of vote either before or after the vote, but they may make general statements. The representative of Pakistan requested the floor in order to make a general statement, which request I granted to the Pakistani delegation. I hope that the representative of Pakistan, when he now continues, will proceed along the lines of a general statement.

I give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): We are used to Indian domination, we are used to Indian bullying, but we are not used to being muzzled by India in the United Nations and we shall not be muzzled, neither by India nor by anybody else. We shall not be muzzled and I will make a general statement as I see fit, because it is

my statement, it is a statement of my delegation, it is a general statement and I will express the views that I wish to.

The Chairman: May I ask the representative of Pakistan if he is going to make a general statement or use the right of reply?

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): My general statement will clarify the position of Pakistan and if I wish to respond to some remarks that have been made in this Committee, I think I have a right to do that, do I not?

The Chairman: Yes, rights of reply can be made after action has been taken.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I wish to make a general statement of my position.

When criticism is made of a draft resolution that is put forward, I think it is quite clear that one should understand the motivations for such criticism. We have been told that there is an abstract confidence-building-measures concept, which was not reflected in our draft resolution. There was talk about a sterile concept of parity. When India goes shopping for arms, does it not talk about seeking balance with some other country? Does Pakistan not have the right of self-defence to arm and to acquire weapons when India is acquiring $100-billion-worth of weapons from other countries, and to talk about the need for military balance at the lowest level of armaments so that we do not waste our resources and may devote them to disarmament? Is that a sterile concept of parity?

Do those of our friends who have voted with India against this draft resolution look at the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe? Does it not speak of military balance? Does it not speak of equilibrium? Did it not negotiate levels of arms for both sides? That was a concept of military balance and military equilibrium which we have sought to reflect in the draft resolution that was sponsored by my delegation.

My friend from India earlier spoke about artificial regions of tension. Let me say that South Asia is not an artificial region of tension. It is an actual region of tension, a region where an Indian occupation army of 700,000 troops is brutally suppressing the rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, killing 80,000 of them over the last 10 years. It is a region where India deployed its armies on Pakistan's borders last year in what it described as an exercise in coercive diplomacy. We are glad that they admitted failure. It is a region where arms are being acquired at the rate of $10-$15 billion a year and threats of use of force are held out.

It is certainly a region which requires peace-building and confidence-building. That is the purpose of the Pakistani initiative — to promote peace in such regions of tension. We are puzzled at the negative vote of some of our friends who themselves talk about regions of tension and confidence-building. But perhaps these are abstract concepts to them. When these are applied to specific regions, such as South Asia, or to other regions of tension, they cast a negative vote.

Yes, we construe this vote as a partisan vote on behalf of a State or States, perhaps, which are in occupation of foreign lands, which seek to impose their domination over their neighbours, and which seek military domination and the suppression of peoples.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of India.

Mr. Varma (India): We seek to address you, Sir, as the Chairman and as one entrusted with the responsibility of guiding our deliberations.

We are indeed disappointed that a segment of our time has been put to the use that it has been put to by one delegation. It queers the pace of the First Committee, it obstructs constructive debate and it tends to distort the views of other delegations. It is neither our intention to speak in the right of reply, nor is it our understanding that time allotted for constructive debate may be used to score propaganda points. We leave it to the entire body of the First Committee to draw its own conclusions.

Reference was made to the statement that was made by India earlier on. We did not refer to any country, we did not refer to any region and, if words and regions and countries are being read into our statement, we would seek the indulgence of the delegation concerned to read the text — or, before reading the text, to at least listen to us a little more carefully.

The Chairman: There are no further requests for the floor, and we have thus concluded our consideration of cluster VI.

Turning now to cluster VII, I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia, to introduce a draft decision under agenda item 73 (e).

Mr. Syed Hasrin (Malaysia): The purpose of my statement is to introduce a draft decision on the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which will be issued as document A/C.1/58/L.61.

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) believes in the necessity of convening a fourth special session on disarmament (SSOD IV). That was reiterated by our heads of State or Government at the Kuala Lumpur summit in February this year. We believe the special session would provide an opportunity for all States to discuss and review the current international disarmament situation. We are convinced that SSOD IV will set the future course of action in the field of disarmament, arms control and related security matters. It would also allow all of us an opportunity to discuss the issue of revitalizing disarmament machinery, including the First Committee, in a comprehensive manner. The Committee may recall that this issue was underscored by many delegations at this session.

The Committee will recall that the Open-ended Working Group on SSOD IV held a number of meetings this year to consider the objectives and agenda, including the possibility of establishing a preparatory committee for the special session. To follow up on the work of the Working Group, NAM introduced draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.25 on 23 October 2003.

A number of informal consultations have been held with some delegations, and based on those consultations, NAM has agreed instead to submit a draft decision, and will not insist that the Committee take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.25/Rev.1 at this session. Copies of the draft decision have been circulated by the Secretariat.

The draft decision is straightforward and basically requests Member States to continue consultation on the subject and to include the item in the provisional agenda of the fifty-ninth session.

Having said that, NAM underscores the importance of reactivating the Open-ended Working Group in 2006. In that connection, our submission of the draft decision should not be construed as prejudging our position at the next session with regard to the reactivation of the Working Group.

The Non-Aligned Movement believes that adopting this draft decision at this session would enable Member States and all political groupings to utilize the cooling-off period to engage with one another constructively with a view to finding common ground to facilitate the work of the Open-ended Working Group in 2006. The working papers submitted at the substantive session of the Working Group this year, including the paper presented by the Chairman of Working Group II at the 1999 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, will be crucial to this consultation process.

While I have the floor, I shall also turn to draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.26, on the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. Based on our consultations with a number of delegations, NAM has decided to revise three paragraphs, as follows.

In the sixth preambular paragraph, we would like to add the words "and transparent" after the word "non-discriminatory".

In the seventh preambular paragraph, as well, we would like to add the words "and transparent" after the word "non-discriminatory".

And lastly, in operative paragraph 3, similarly, we would like to add the words "and transparent" after the word "non-discriminatory".

We have submitted those amendments to the Secretariat for printing so that we can take action tomorrow.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of Malaysia for his statement, in which he introduced draft decision A/C.1./58/L.61 and orally amended draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.26.

There are no further requests for the floor under either cluster VII or cluster X. I would note that we have previously concluded our consideration of both cluster VIII and cluster IX.

Before adjourning the meeting, I would like to note that the Committee should conclude its work tomorrow, Wednesday, 5 November. I therefore plead with all delegations to contribute towards that goal.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/58/PV.22

General Assembly
Fifty-eighth session

Official Records

First Committee
22nd meeting
Wednesday, 5 November 2003, 2.30 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Sareva ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 2.45 p.m.

Agenda items 62 to 80 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: The Committee will continue today to take decisions on remaining draft resolutions. We will take action on draft resolutions A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1 and A/C.1/58/L.26/Rev.1 and on A/C.1/58/L.61. At the request of the sponsors, consideration of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 has been postponed until tomorrow.

Before the Committee proceeds to take action on the draft resolutions in cluster VII, "Disarmament machinery", I shall give the floor to those representatives wishing to make general statements other than explanations of vote or to introduce revised draft resolutions.

Mr. Chindawongse (Thailand): Thailand supports the draft resolution contained in A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1 and is pleased to join in sponsoring it, because we feel that it will contribute to the broader effort to revitalize the General Assembly. We hope, however, that whatever the outcome of this exercise in the First Committee, it will also take into account the general direction taken by the General Assembly, as well as the pertinent conclusions and recommendations that may emerge from the recently appointed High-Level Panel on Global Security Threats, under the chairmanship of Mr. Anand Panyarachun, former Prime Minister of Thailand. Thailand would thus like to be included in the list of sponsors of the draft resolution.

Mr. Trezza (Italy): It is my honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, the associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey and the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area Iceland and Liechtenstein align themselves with this statement.

Let me start by saying that we fully endorse draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1, entitled "Improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the First Committee", which has been sponsored by all EU member States and acceding countries. Indeed, we are committed to increasing the effectiveness of the working methods of the First Committee. This is not a task which can be settled once and for all. Rather, we need to keep the work of the First Committee constantly under review in order to rationalize it and to keep abreast of the security challenges that need to be addressed.

In that regard, Sir, I would like to recall the efforts undertaken in 1993 by one of your predecessors as Chairman of the First Committee, the representative of Germany, who presented proposals for the rationalization of the work of this body and submitted a

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03-59713 (E)

draft resolution which was adopted by consensus as resolution 48/87. That resolution should remain a point of reference for the task ahead of us. We are committed to maintaining the relevance of the First Committee and enhancing its effectiveness. We advocate an inclusive and focused approach which takes account of all the security concerns of its members.

We were encouraged by the presence of the President of the General Assembly during our deliberations, as well as by the active participation of delegations in the informal debate which you, Sir, wisely convened on this issue. Many new ideas were raised during those discussions and several written contributions were circulated. We welcomed them all as tangible support for our work, and we commend you, Mr. Chairman, for having initiated this debate.

The EU believes that the working methods of the First Committee can be improved for the benefit of all members, and is convinced of the need to maintain a balanced agenda which reflects important goals and objectives. The First Committee should also be able to react to and focus upon today's immediate security problems. At the same time, it is essential that all delegations in the First Committee should be able to express their main concerns in the fields of disarmament, non-proliferation and security in general and to submit draft resolutions reflecting those concerns.

On this basis, the EU is ready to continue to discuss and deliberate the issue of the rationalization of the work of the First Committee and to convey to the Secretary-General its views on the issue of improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the First Committee.

Mr. Emmanuel (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): As I am taking the floor for the first time in the First Committee, my delegation is pleased, Sir, to offer you its warm congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee, whose work you are guiding with great skill and acumen. We would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

With regard to the issue of revitalizing the methods of work of the First Committee, my delegation would like to pay tribute to the initiative of the delegation of the United States of America and to thank all those delegations that introduced specific proposals designed to enhance the effectiveness of the work of the Committee.

As for draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1, my delegation had no objection to the issue of the enhancement of the working methods of the First Committee being discussed in informal consultation. My delegation would like, however, to stress that it supports the position outlined earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement to the effect that the issue of enhancing the effectiveness of the First Committee cannot be dealt with in isolation or taken out of the overall context of the revitalization of the General Assembly.

My delegation is delighted to see that its concerns have been taken into consideration by the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1. We shall therefore not oppose adoption of that draft resolution. However, we continue to believe that the slow pace of nuclear disarmament cannot be attributed to the methods of the First Committee. Nor can the seven-year stalemate of the Disarmament Commission and the impossibility of implementing the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons be blamed on the working methods of the First Committee.

In the final analysis, improving the effectiveness of the First Committee also means, above all, respecting existing procedures while refraining from overburdening it with questions that are not on its agenda and which are moreover entrusted to ad hoc bodies of the General Assembly.

Mr. Umer (Pakistan): I am making this general statement in regard to items under cluster VII, relating to the disarmament machinery. The special focus of my intervention is draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1, entitled "Improving the effectiveness of the methods of the work of the First Committee".

We strongly believe in the improvement of the functioning of this Committee — or of any other organ of the United Nations. I have personally been involved in the reform of the intergovernmental machinery of the United Nations for many years, which gives rise to my conviction that serious efforts are required, indeed, to make the intergovernmental machinery more effective and more efficient. It is in that context that we look at the draft resolution contained in

A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1. In that very context, we are prepared to look at it with a positive frame of mind.

However, there are a number of issues which cannot escape the scrutiny of an objective observer. The title of the draft resolution says "Improving the effectiveness of the methods of work". We have absolutely no problem with that. We would be very happy if the methods of work of the First Committee could be improved. But then, when we look at the first preambular paragraph, which talks about existing and new threats to international peace and security, we have some difficulty in putting the two together, because when you are talking about improving the effectiveness of methods of work, you are talking about procedures, basically: how to improve the procedural efficiency of this Committee — better allocation of time perhaps; better allocation of the agenda items. We have absolutely no problem with that. But we cannot fully understand why this is linked to existing threats to international peace and security. Perhaps the original sponsor of this draft resolution might wish to shed some light on that.

And then, what are the threats to international peace and security? I think we need to have a serious discussion on it. As far as we are concerned — and I believe as many members of the Non-Aligned Movement are concerned — the most serious threat to international peace and security is the continued existence of vast stockpiles of nuclear weapons. I would like to ask the sponsor of this draft resolution how an improvement in the methodology of work of this Committee would result in the reduction of nuclear weapons. I think everyone in this Committee would be most interested in getting an answer to that question.

I come from Geneva. We have seen there for many years now a total reluctance — an absolute rejection — even of the talk of reducing nuclear weapons; even of the talk of nuclear disarmament: total rejection. And yet we have this draft resolution which talks about threats to international peace and security.

The other threat to international peace and security — and our assessment, again, is subject to correction — is the phenomenon of vertical proliferation. New and highly deadly weapons are being designed for deployment and use — openly stated. So, we would like to know how the improvement of the methodology of the work of this Committee is going to help us in respect of this new and deadlier form of nuclear weapons.

The third most devastating threat that we face today is the phenomenon of occupation. I would like to know whether there is anyone sitting here who believes that the occupation of foreign lands does not constitute the most devastating threat to international peace and security. And yet we find no mention of foreign occupation in this revolutionary draft resolution.

And then, another grave threat to international peace and security is the growing, corroding and debilitating concept of unilateralism. I am sure everyone here agrees that we are acting in the First Committee within the parameters of the Charter of the United Nations. And when one country or two countries or a number of countries choose to work outside the Charter of the United Nations, that poses a serious threat to international peace and security. Yet we do not find any mention of that in this draft resolution.

Finally, there is this insidious concept of pre-emptive military action — a concept totally alien to the purposes and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The Charter allows the use of force under only one condition: Article 51, which is self-defence. And yet, in recent years we have seen this deadly concept of pre-emptive military action becoming the norm of the day. And still we are told we need to reform the First Committee of the General Assembly.

We are also slightly perplexed by the fact that we are talking about new and existing threats. We would like to address those threats within the precepts, the purposes and the principles of the United Nations Charter. There is no mention of the Charter. In the whole draft resolution, the Charter does not exist. So, we hope the protagonists of reform of the First Committee are not thinking in terms of going beyond the Charter of the United Nations, because that would be a grave disservice to this Organization.

Finally, paragraph 1 requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report which will compile and organize the views of Member States. We have no problem with that. What we find most mysterious is that yesterday we submitted a draft resolution on confidence-building measures, which was, I think, opposed by everyone listed here. The substance of that draft resolution was to ask the Secretary-General to get the views of Member States on how to generate

confidence-building measures. We were told that this was too intrusive and that the Secretary-General has no business doing that. And yet, in this draft resolution, the Secretary-General is being asked to do exactly the same thing. In my limited understanding of the English language, this would be called a double standard. But then, perhaps this is the world in which we are required to live.

We hope, as I said earlier, that this initiative will lead to a change in the thinking that prevails in this Committee and that its adoption will be followed by implementation. The basic problem, the fundamental problem, that we face in this Committee is not time allocation or methodology; the problem we face is that, the moment we adopt these resolutions, nobody cares about them. We talk about nuclear disarmament, regional disarmament and conventional disarmament, but which of these resolutions are implemented? People would have accepted the earnestness of the intentions of this draft resolution's sponsor, had that delegation mentioned that the effectiveness of the First Committee can be considerably increased if we start implementing these resolutions. That does not happen.

Regardless of all of this, we believe in cooperation. We will not ask for a vote on this draft resolution, despite its flaws, which I have pointed out. We hope that, when member States give their views, and we will give our views along the lines that I have indicated, when we meet next year, it will be possible to launch a serious and an honest effort. This effort should not just be the former, not just an optical illusion, but an honest effort to enhance the efficiency and the effectiveness of this Committee.

Mr. Moungara-Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Mr. Chairman, this being the first time my delegation has spoken in the course of our work, I would like to say how very much we appreciate the way in which — and the skill with which — you and your associates in the Bureau are guiding our debates.

I have chosen to speak at this juncture to give my delegation's view on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1, on improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the First Committee. My delegation expresses appreciation to the sponsors of this draft resolution, which is directly in line with the work of reforming the General Assembly. Indeed, the heavy responsibility entrusted to our Committee of considering issues of disarmament and international security requires that the Committee be more effective in its working methods.

We would also hope that the exercise upon which we are about to embark, that of improving our working methods, will contribute to improving, if not to advancing, the general process of disarmament.

The Chairman: No other delegations wish to make general statements at this juncture. We will therefore now proceed to take action on the draft resolution and draft decision under cluster 7. Before doing so, I shall call on delegations wishing to speak in explanation of vote or position before action is taken.

Mr. Varma (India): Allow me also, Mr. Chairman, to take this opportunity this afternoon to convey our deep appreciation of the manner in which you have been steering the work of this Committee, as we approach the harbour, so to speak. The anchorage has been put off by a day, but this only gives is us the pleasure of continuing our association with you. We would like to commend you for your efforts.

We have taken the floor this afternoon to set forth our views on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1, and we would like to state the following. We commend the principal sponsor of this draft resolution, the delegation of the United States, for bringing an important text before this Committee. We also note with appreciation the constructive approach that that delegation adopted in conducting wide-ranging consultations during the drafting stage. We see this in light of the common objective of the collective strengthening of multilateralism, an objective we all share.

We look forward to addressing the core issue of the reform of our Committee — essentially, its working methods. We will actively work towards the objectives of this draft resolution. We will support draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1, and we urge all delegations to join in this creditable endeavour. We believe that this draft resolution provides a platform for discussion: a discussion that is much needed; a platform that we are about to bring into being.

Let us not hang all our problems, difficulties and frustrations on the belief that there is one magical solution to the problems that we face. This draft resolution provides, as we said, a platform for furthering our work. We also believe that, in doing so, the First Committee will be able to make an important

contribution to the larger question of the revitalization of the General Assembly.

Mr. Umer (Pakistan): I gave a general statement a while ago and I would now like to explain my position, which will obviously be to go along with the so-called consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1.

A while ago, we heard a reference to the strengthening of multilateralism. We are very encouraged by that reference. The question is, how can multilateralism be strengthened? The high priests of multilateralism might wish to enlighten us, but I would like to believe that multilateralism will be strengthened if we begin to implement the decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. Is there any way of strengthening multilateralism other than accepting, respecting and implementing the decisions of the Security Council? So, what we see here is an attempt to play games. Why do these champions of multilateralism not implement the decisions of multilateralism? It is very easy to state that this draft resolution will strengthen multilateralism. But how will it strengthen multilateralism unless and until the individual who spoke before me, in particular, tells us right now, in the presence of the Committee, that his country is prepared to implement the decisions of multilateralism. That will not happen. There is a basic hypocrisy that is at work on this particular question.

And then, we are told that there is no magic solution. Of course there is no magic solution. We have to work hard; we have to work incrementally; we have to work over time to achieve the results that we desire. But there are certain things that are totally inimical, hostile and antagonistic to the very essence of multilateralism. The first of these things is the forcible occupation of foreign lands by brutal occupation: brutal use of force. If these countries that talk about multilateralism started implementing the spirit of multilateralism, maybe ours might become a better world to live in.

So what I am trying to say is that we have no problem with this draft resolution and we will work with the sponsor of the draft resolution next year to ensure that the Charter is respected. We will not accept any attempt to subvert the Charter, make no mistake about it. We have a lot at stake, each one of us, in upholding the integrity of the Charter of the United Nations, and it will remain so. Within these parameters, if the sponsors are prepared to work with us in a spirit of respect for the United Nations Charter and its purposes and principles, we will work with them. But we will not allow these little games to be played, in which we are told about the strengthening of multilateralism while these very countries are the ones who have subverted every single decision of the United Nations and the Security Council.

Having said that, my delegation would be very happy to go along with the consensus on this draft resolution and would be prepared to work with the sponsors next year. We will give our views on this draft resolution and we hope that these views will be taken into account, in an honest, sincere and earnest effort to make this Committee a true platform for preserving international peace and security.

The Chairman: We have heard the last statement in explanation of position.

The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1. I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1, entitled "Improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the First Committee". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of the United States at the 14th meeting, on 23 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1 and also in documents A/C.1/58/INF/2 and Add.1, Add.4, Add.5 and Add.6. In addition, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Afghanistan, Thailand, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay and Monaco.

The Chairman: The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that the draft resolution be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1 was adopted.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft decision A/C.1/58/L.61.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on the draft decision contained in document A/C.1/58/L.61, entitled "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Non-Aligned Movement at the 21st meeting, on 4 November 2003.

The Chairman: The sponsors of the draft decision have expressed the wish that the draft decision be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft decision A/C.1/58/L.16 was adopted.

The Chairman: I now call on those delegations wishing to make an explanation of position on the decisions just taken.

Mr. Gala López (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to explain its position on the adoption without a vote of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1.

In the view of Cuba, it is imperative to carry out real, effective reform and an in-depth process of democratizing the United Nations that would guarantee the ability of the Organization to preserve peace and to spearhead the struggle for general and complete disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, to which humankind aspires. Reforming and revitalizing the General Assembly must be a single and integrated process. The open-ended consultations chaired by the current President of the General Assembly are the setting in which major decisions must be considered to guarantee more effective and efficient work by all the Main Committees of the General Assembly, including the First Committee.

In our opinion, the chief author of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1 is trying to force us to embark upon an independent path to reform for the First Committee. Curiously — and regrettably — that same delegation does not show the same readiness or interest in exchanging views or engaging in dialogue on items of greater relevance in the realm of disarmament, including the matter of convening the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

One cannot be sure that this Committee needs greater changes in its working methods than the other Main Committees do. This is why we do not understand or share the particular interest shown in establishing a singular, separate process in the case of the First Committee.

Moreover, the request included in this draft resolution to include a new agenda item would appear to contradict calls for the so-called streamlining of the General Assembly's agenda. That concern grows stronger still in the light of the fact that, starting now, other Main Committees may feel themselves encouraged likewise to add separate items to their agenda related to enhancing the efficiency of their respective working methods.

We also do not find relevant, in this text, the linkage that it would seek to establish between enhancing the efficacy of the working methods of this Committee and the date on which a criminal and terrorist act was committed, an act condemned by all Member States.

The efforts to revitalize the main Committees must be in synchrony with the general guidelines established at the plenary level through a process of extensive consultations among Member States. The recommendations to improve the working methods of the main Committees, including the possibility of rationalizing their respective programmes of work, must represent the outcome of broad-ranging consultations and consensus.

We cannot fool ourselves. The effectiveness of the work of the main Committees, including this one, will depend more on the political will of the member States than on any changes in their working methods, which should in no case have an adverse impact on the mandates and priorities previously set at special sessions of the General Assembly and at United Nations conferences and summits. No rationalization of the structures or functions of the main Committees could compensate for the lack of political will of certain powerful States or for their preference for unilateralism.

Finally, my delegation reiterates that the reform and strengthening process should endow the United Nations with the capacity fully to implement the Millennium Declaration with respect to the proscription of weapons of mass destruction and, in particular, nuclear weapons in order to reduce the role

played by such weapons in security doctrines and policies, curb their qualitative improvement and deployment, and prevent the development of new, highly lethal conventional weapons and the use of outer space for non-peaceful purposes.

Mr. Duarte (Brazil): As this will probably be the last time my delegation addresses the Committee at this session, let me briefly thank you, Sir, for the excellent way in which you have taken the helm and brought this ship to good harbour.

Allow me to explain the reasons why Brazil decided to go along with the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1. We appreciate the effort of the initiators of the draft resolution to incorporate other delegations' suggestions, including some of those that we ourselves presented to them. Brazil fully shares the grave concern expressed by the international community at threats to international peace and security that have emerged in recent times. We should not, however, lose sight of the persistence of very serious threats that have been present for a long time. New and existing threats alike should be addressed with determination by the First Committee.

Initiatives aimed at improving the effectiveness of the First Committee — including those that have been referred to as housekeeping measures — should not, in our view, be considered outside the broader discussions of the overall reform of the United Nations and revitalization of the General Assembly. The views expressed by the Secretary-General and by the heads of State and Government during the general debate of the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session must be fully taken into account.

Articles 11.1 and 13.1 (a) of the Charter of the United Nations clearly set forth the role of the General Assembly. Those articles highlight the importance of the contribution of its First Committee to the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments, as well as to the promotion of international cooperation in the political field. In this connection, Brazil fully supports the work that is being carried out by the presidency of the General Assembly at its current session.

In that understanding, Brazil has accepted the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

Mr. Najafi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I have taken the floor to explain my delegation's position on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.15/Rev.1, entitled "Improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the First Committee".

Since this was the first time that such a draft resolution had been considered by the First Committee, my delegation dealt with it constructively and made clear its views during the informal consultations. We joined the consensus in the understanding that the issue involved — improving the methods of work of the First Committee — could facilitate the broader effort within the overall process of the General Assembly's revitalization, as is referred to in the third preambular paragraph of the current draft.

I should also affirm once again the important positions that were elaborated by the Non-Aligned Movement during the informal meetings of the First Committee, in which the Non-Aligned Movement emphasized that the First Committee should avoid piecemeal approaches. Furthermore, the aim of the current initiative should be limited to the methods of work. Therefore, any suggestion which may involve the First Committee's actual reform should not be carried out in isolation from the overall process of the General Assembly's revitalization and should comprehensively address issues concerning disarmament machinery.

In our view, the current draft should have been a merely procedural text and should not have touched on the substantive issues. However, it did. In that regard, my delegation would like to express its view that the existing threats to international peace and security referred to in the first preambular paragraph — particularly from the continued existence of nuclear weapons and of their possible use or threat of use — must be dealt with as the highest priority. In considering new threats, one should not lose sight of the fact that the doctrine of pre-emptive attack; the lowering of the threshold of the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons; the development of new mini-nuclear weapons; the establishment of exclusive groupings parallel to the United Nations; and the proliferation of the unilateral and lawless use of force, with or without justification — as noted by the Secretary-General in his statement to the General Assembly — are among the most dangerous new threats to international peace and security.

As my delegation stated in the general debate, we welcome any proposal aimed at enhancing the efficiency of United Nations bodies, including the First Committee. In this endeavour, however, the views of all member States must be taken into account and, more importantly, priority should be accorded to the long-sought objective of humanity: nuclear disarmament.

The Chairman: We have thus concluded our consideration of cluster 7 for this meeting and for this session.

We will proceed to take action on the one draft resolution that remains under cluster 10, "International security". That draft resolution is contained in document A/C.1/58/L.26/Rev.1.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will proceed to take action on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.26/Rev.1, entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation". The draft resolution was introduced at the 14th meeting of the Committee on 23 October by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Non-Aligned Movement. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/58/INF/2.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Bulgaria, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Micronesia (Federated States of), Poland, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine

Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.26/REV.1 was adopted by 104 votes to 10, with 44 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Haiti informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman: I will now give the floor to those delegations wishing to express themselves in explanation of vote after the vote.

Mr. Stritt (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland should like to clarify its position on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.26/Rev.1, just adopted by the Committee.

My country has always advocated multilateralism in international negotiations and we thank the sponsors of the draft resolution for reaffirming that principle. However, one cannot a priori exclude the bilateral or any other approach that might help to attain common goals in the interests of all. That applies particularly in

the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, as some important bilateral initiatives have highlighted. We therefore consider multilateral, plurilateral, bilateral and other approaches at the national level to be complementary to one another. We feel that the draft resolution on which we have just voted does not sufficiently reflect such an approach.

Moreover, we have some difficulty in accepting certain formulations contained in the draft resolution. I would cite as one example the provision whereby States Members of the United Nations would be requested to refrain from directing unverified non-compliance accusations. In our view, verification is precisely the essential means for determining whether or not accusations are justified. Each State, in principle, should be able to express its doubts concerning non-compliance with international law. Accordingly, Switzerland abstained in the voting on the draft resolution.

Mr. Trezza (Italy): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.26/Rev.1, entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation". The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia; the associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey; and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this explanation of vote.

Multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation is a concept to which the EU is fully committed. As stated in the Declaration on Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, adopted by the European Council held in Thessaloniki on 19 and 20 June 2003, the European approach is guided by the commitment to uphold the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements and to support multilateral institutions charged respectively with verification and with upholding compliance with those treaties. Similar concepts are contained in the basic principles for an EU strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as in the action plan to implement those principles.

Multilateralism is indeed one of the core principles in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation with a view to establishing, maintaining and strengthening universal norms and enlarging their scope. Multilateral cooperation is of particular importance in combating new threats of terrorism as well as persisting security threats, in particular the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means. It plays a key role in the implementation of relevant international instruments of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

Unfortunately, draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.26/Rev.1 contains a number of elements in both the preambular and the operative paragraphs which the European Union cannot support. As the elements in question are of a serious nature, we have brought to the attention of the sponsors our concerns and views on this subject and have provided suggestions as to how the draft could be improved. While we appreciate that some of our suggestions have been incorporated into the text, we regret that our fundamental concerns have not been taken into account and that the draft resolution retains language that makes it unbalanced.

The European Union believes that unilateral, bilateral and plurilateral actions in disarmament and non-proliferation can bring and have brought positive results. Among other documents, the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons itself recognizes that. Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.26/Rev.1 does not give sufficient credit to such measures.

It is for those reasons that we are not in a position to support the draft resolution. We remain committed to multilateral approaches in the areas of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation and continue to recognize their importance.

Ms. Pollack (Canada): I take the floor to explain Canada's abstention in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.26/Rev.1.

We need, and indeed welcome opportunities here to promote multilateralism in the non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament fields. As we have noted throughout this session of the Committee, Canada believes that strong, legally-binding multilateral treaties, respected and implemented, are indispensable to common security.

We would have been pleased to support the draft resolution. However, despite Canada's firm, long-standing commitment to multilateral principles and

approaches, we could not do so, on account of some specific problematic elements in the draft resolution.

Multilateralism is indeed a core principle in our work; it is not, however, "the" core principle, in the language of the draft resolution (para. 1) and not, as implied in the text, the only fundamental means. Our shared security system is, rather, the sum of many parts, involving a variety of multilateral, plurilateral, regional, bilateral and unilateral measures. All of these are necessary in effective global non-proliferation arms control and disarmament; none is sufficient by itself.

We also have problems with the tone of parts of the draft resolution. Rather than advancing an inclusive vision of multilateralism, it offers an overly rigid, restricted and harmful interpretation that could actually lessen the options available to and required by the global community to address security challenges. That is why we were unable to support draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.26/Rev.1 and instead abstained.

We look forward to working constructively together next year to enhance the role and contribution of multilateralism and to trying to develop a draft resolution that can be adopted without a vote.

Mr. Stephens (Australia): Australia supports effective multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. Collectively, the international community should strengthen multilateral mechanisms to meet the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems as well as by conventional weapons.

Regrettably, however, we had a number of substantial difficulties with draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.26/Rev.1, notably its failure to acknowledge the legitimate role played by plurilateral, regional and national efforts and arrangements to complement multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation. Nor do we see continuous erosion in the field of multilateral arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

For those reasons, we abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.26/Rev.1. Australia will continue to play an active role in international efforts to promote disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Gala López (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to reaffirm the importance of preserving multilateralism in international relations. Cuba reaffirms multilateralism as the basic principle of negotiations in the sphere of disarmament and non-proliferation. We also reaffirm multilateralism as the basic principle for resolving worrisome disarmament and non-proliferation issues. My country is aware of the need to continue to move forward in the areas of disarmament, arms regulation and non-proliferation on the basis of universal, multilateral and non-discriminatory negotiations aimed at achieving general and complete disarmament under strict international control.

Cuba believes that multilateral disarmament agreements provide a mechanism whereby States parties can hold consultations among themselves and cooperate in resolving any problem that might arise as to the objectives of such agreements or the implementation of their provisions. Such consultations and cooperation can also be carried out through appropriate international procedures within the framework of the United Nations and in conformity with the Charter. Finally, we agree with others in indicating that the use of unilateral measures by Member States to resolve security issues of concern to them would jeopardize international peace and security and undermine confidence in the international security system as well as the foundations of the United Nations itself.

The Chairman: We have heard the last statement in explanation of vote after the voting. We have thus concluded our consideration of cluster 10.

The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/58/PV.23

General Assembly
Fifty-eighth session

Official Records

First Committee
23rd meeting
Thursday, 6 November 2003, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Jarmo Sareva ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda items 62 to 80 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: I will now suspend the meeting to allow for informal consultations and to enable delegations to be informed of the current state of play with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 and the position of its main sponsors.

The meeting was suspended at 3.10 p.m. and resumed at 4.15 p.m.

The Chairman: The Committee will take a decision today on the remaining draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1, entitled "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects", as contained in cluster 4, "Conventional weapons".

Before the Committee proceeds to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1, I shall give the floor to those delegations wishing to make a general statement other than explanations of vote or to introduce revised draft resolutions.

Mr. Trezza (Italy): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1, entitled "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects". The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia; the associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey; and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its member States can legitimately claim to be at the forefront of the fight against illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. All EU member States and acceding countries are among the sponsors of the draft resolution. The EU remains committed to the full implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and believes that the results of the July 2003 Biennial Meeting of States were very positive. Through its political support and its financial contribution to small arms and light weapons initiatives, the EU has proved the consistency of its engagement. We believe that the momentum of this important multilateral initiative should be maintained and enhanced.

In this light, the EU welcomes draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, and earnestly hopes that it will be adopted by consensus. As stated in the general debate, the European Union attaches great importance to the Biennial Meeting of 2005, which will represent a crucial step towards preparations for the 2006 Review Conference, and intends to propose that an EU member State chair the 2005 meeting.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

03-59972 (E)

The problem of small arms and light weapons has many different aspects and the issue must therefore be addressed accordingly, at global, regional and national levels.

We would like to draw the particular attention of the First Committee to the fact that further substantive work is required on export controls, which are an essential tool to curtail the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons. At the 2001 United Nations Conference on small arms and light weapons it was agreed that one measure to combat the illicit trade in such weapons was to use authenticated end-user certificates. Such certificates help to prevent the illegal diversion and re-export of small arms and light weapons. The EU promoted the inclusion of a paragraph on that issue in this year's draft resolution on the basis of language that was taken directly from the Programme of Action. From the many consultations we conducted with countries from all geographical groups, we know that there is great support for taking this issue forward. The EU plans to come back to this issue over the coming year, in close consultation with other delegations.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Group of Governmental Experts, draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 would postpone the question of the nature of the instrument on tracing and marking which will be negotiated in 2004. The EU believes that it would be helpful to clarify that ambiguity. The EU is convinced that a multilateral, legally binding instrument in this field would yield considerable progress, first and foremost in enhancing the means of establishing evidence against illegal traders and those engaged in terrorist activities, and the quality of that evidence.

As I expect this to be my last statement in the First Committee, I would like to say a few final words on behalf of the European Union and acceding countries. Before our work in the First Committee comes to an end this year, and while the ship is being steered into the harbour, I would like to express to you, Mr. Chairman, our genuine appreciation for the seriousness and rigour with which you have conducted our work. We also pay tribute to you for your genuine and successful efforts to initiate the process of rationalizing and making more efficient the work of the First Committee. This was a special feature of this session, and we thank you for a job well done.

Likewise, I express our thanks to the Secretariat staff for their work and for the help they provided to delegations during the session. Our special thanks go to the secretariat of the Committee for the valuable services and advice that it rendered. The interpreters and translators have done an excellent and remarkable job, and we owe them heartfelt thanks. We are also grateful to all the officials in charge of conference logistics, so crucial to the success of the weeks of work.

Finally, I would like to convey to our fellow delegations our appreciation for the positive atmosphere and spirit of cooperation that prevailed among delegations this year. We must all commit ourselves to continuing to enhance our dialogue and mutual understanding; the EU is ready to do its part.

Ms. Notutela (South Africa): I am taking the floor on behalf of Colombia, Japan and my own country, South Africa, as the main sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons is a major threat to people in the developing world, especially in Africa.

For several years, draft resolutions on small arms has enjoyed wide support and has been adopted by consensus. It is with deep regret — and we find it very distressing — that today, when we are considering the implementation of the Programme of Action on small arms, we are forced to make a different decision.

I want to assure you, Mr. Chairman, and the other sponsors of the draft resolution, that the main sponsors have consulted very widely on various aspects of the draft resolution. We consulted extensively on all the issues that were raised regarding the programme budget implications. The savings that we could manage to get regarding the programme budget implications were, unfortunately, not sufficient. We regret that. We are now faced with a choice, and consensus on the draft resolution might be broken.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the other sponsors of the draft resolution for their patience. Action on the draft resolution was supposed to have been taken on Monday, but as of now nothing has happened. We regret the delay, but the commitment of the three main sponsors to the provisions of the draft resolution has been strengthened by what has happened this week.

I would also like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me enough time to consult with various delegations, including the other main sponsors. I want to re-emphasize the point that what we agreed upon in 2001 regarding the Programme of Action still remains valid.

Mr. Stritt (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland deems it most important to pursue efforts undertaken in the context of efforts to combat the proliferation of light weapons. As other delegations have done, my delegation deplores the fact that it was not possible to achieve consensus on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 — which Switzerland nonetheless deems to be of the utmost importance — despite the intensive efforts exerted by a number of delegations. My delegation regrets in particular that the impasse is due not to a substantive issue but to a financing issue, which, for that matter, was detected in a particularly tardy way in our work.

Nonetheless, Switzerland voices the hope that it will be possible to resolve this problem before this draft resolution comes before the plenary for consideration. We believe in particular that it is possible both to mobilize resources and to deal with costs. We believe that some potential savings can be made without an adverse effect on the calibre of our work. In any case, Switzerland will strive in the days ahead to make its contribution to the quest for a ground-breaking way of resolving this financing problems — a solution that all delegations concerned find suitable.

The Chairman: If no other delegation wishes to make a general statement before we proceed to take action on the draft resolution, we will proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1.

I now call on the representative of Cuba, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. Gala López (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The United Nations, and in particular the General Assembly, as the multilateral forum par excellence, has demonstrated that it is the most suitable arena for elaborating, promoting, recommending and agreeing on the relevant steps aimed at preventing, confronting and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

The adoption in July 2001 of a United Nations Programme of Action to confront that scourge is clear testimony of that fact. In the light of the importance my Government attaches to this issue, my delegation will once again lend its support to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1.

We should like in particular to clarify our interpretation of operative paragraph 11. Our understanding is that the outcome of the broad-based consultations to be held by the Secretary-General must not prejudge the discussions to be held subsequently among Member States aimed at determining the measures necessary to reinforce international cooperation and address illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons.

Having put forward these criteria on the item before us and on this draft resolution, my delegation formally requests to be included among the sponsors of the draft.

The Chairman: The Committee will therefore now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1, entitled "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects".

The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of South Africa at the 13th meeting, on 22 October 2003. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 and also in documents A/C.1/58/INF.2 and addenda 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. In addition, Sri Lanka and Cuba have also become sponsors of the draft resolution.

In that connection, I should like to draw the Committee's attention to the programme budget implications of this draft resolution, which are contained in document A/C.1/58/L.56.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China,

Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

United States of America

Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 was adopted by 162 votes to 1, with no abstentions.

The Chairman: I shall now give the floor to those delegations wishing to speak in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. McGinnis (United States of America): It is with great regret that the United States delegation has voted "no" on A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1, on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

Our Government strongly supports the substantive measures and activities proposed in the draft. However, the estimated cost of nearly $1.9 million for activities not previously budgeted, communicated to delegations in an unacceptably late manner, through the associated programme budget implications contained in document A/C.1/58/L.56, left our delegation no option but to oppose this draft as a matter of fiduciary discipline.

All here know that the United States is an active participant and leader in the fight against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects and that we will continue to work to that end. We view as particularly promising the marking and tracing exercise that would take place over the next two years, as it would complement the existing programme for marking and tracing small arms and light weapons in the United States. United States policy on maintaining budget discipline at the United Nations, however, is equally well known.

Even though steps have been taken to reduce the cost, the nearly $1.5 million in projected costs identified in the programme budget implications on resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 are neither allocated for in the draft 2004-2005 biennial United Nations budget, nor offset by reductions in programmes of far less priority than combating this menace.

In a world of competing priorities and limited resources, choices must be made. To date, however, the necessary choices have not been made, either to pare down the activities called for in draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 to a more manageable level; to find offsetting savings in other programmes that, however worthy, are of a lower priority; or to do a little of both. Indeed, the entire process leading up to a disappointing end for this draft resolution in the First Committee deserves to be the subject of considered analysis at a later date.

As is well known, it is long-standing United States policy to oppose unfunded financial mandates that increase the global United Nations budget. Unmanaged, the activities provided for in draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 would do precisely that. The United States therefore intends to work vigorously in the Fifth Committee to ensure that this draft resolution becomes revenue-neutral. We hope that other delegations will join us in that endeavour, for there few priorities higher within the international community than combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. Working together, Member States can provide the full political support and full funding that this

critical issue rightly deserves and still keep faith with the need to maintain budget discipline.

Our delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the delegations of the primary sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 — Colombia, Japan and South Africa — for their dynamic flexibility in searching for ways to surmount the challenges posed by a programme budget implications process in serious need of improvement. Today's vote by the United States in no way reflects on the stewardship of the draft resolution by those delegations. On the contrary, our four delegations spared no effort to try to find a way to bring about a consensus on this matter in the First Committee. In the end, there simply was not enough time remaining in the current session to craft a solution satisfactory to all delegations.

Our delegation looks forward to working in the Fifth Committee with the delegations of the sponsors and with other delegations to resolve the financial questions surrounding this draft resolution in a manner that will permit the United States to join in a consensus when the draft resolution comes before the General Assembly for adoption.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your excellent and efficient running of the Committee. We appreciate your efforts to revitalize the Committee. We also thank the Secretariat for the support it provided to you and to the Committee.

Mr. Ogawa (Japan): Small arms and light weapons are de facto weapons of mass destruction that claim a large number of victims every year. From the humanitarian point of view, it is imperative that we take urgent action to cope with this problem. We are therefore very pleased that we, together with so many other sponsoring countries, have been able to submit this draft resolution.

At the same time, it is important that the effectiveness and efficiency of United Nations budgetary spending be enhanced so that we will be able to address high-priority issues within the limited resources of the United Nations. In order to reflect such efforts in the United Nations programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005, we must further elaborate priority-setting, among other issues. In that regard, Japan has opposed expanding the United Nations budget without discussion of priority setting.

Although this draft resolution involved programme budget implications, we assign high priority to the issue of small arms and light weapons, and we acted accordingly. However, our action on this draft resolution does not mean that Japan has changed its basic position on the necessity for a prioritization of United Nations activities or on the overall level of the United Nations budget. Therefore, we shall continue to review carefully the required cost and consider it with the Secretariat and the Member States concerned in order to avoid further increasing the level of the United Nations budget.

The Chairman: We have heard the last statement in explanation of vote after the voting.

I shall now give the floor to those delegations wishing to make general statements.

Mr. Goussous (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the States members of the League of Arab States, I have the honour to express to you, Mr. Chairman, our profound appreciation and gratitude for your efficient management of the proceedings of the First Committee over the past five weeks and for your prudent leadership of the Committee, which has brought us to a successful conclusion that demonstrates the General Assembly's central role in the area of disarmament and international security. That conclusion is the culmination of a record of ability and efficiency — skills shown throughout your diplomatic career, both in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and here in the United Nations. I should also like to express our thanks and gratitude to all the other officers of the Committee for their dynamism, which enhanced our work, and for the complete transparency that they demonstrated.

The Arab Group would also would like to thank all the staff of the Secretariat and of its Department for Disarmament Affairs and to express its gratitude for the leadership of Mr. Nobuyasu Abe, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, who spared no effort to ensure the smooth deliberations of the First Committee. In addition, I should like to express our thanks and appreciation to Mr. Mohammad Sattar, Secretary of the First Committee, for his dedicated efforts, which have had a positive impact on the Committee's work. Our thanks go also to all interpreters and to the entire conference services team.

Mr. Syed Hasrin (Malaysia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement

(NAM). First of all, NAM would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the manner in which you have conducted the work of the Committee over the past five weeks. We also express our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau.

As in previous years, NAM approached our session in a constructive frame of mind. We engaged interested delegations in informal consultations on our draft decisions and draft resolutions. Those informal consultations proved to be very useful, as they allowed us to exchange views with other delegations in a spirit of compromise and cooperation to find common ground. Where possible, NAM took on board some of the concerns raised by various delegations. NAM has also treated draft resolutions presented by other delegations in the same spirit. We thank those delegations that extended their cooperation to NAM.

The Committee has now completed its consideration of all the items on its agenda and has managed to adopt 53 draft decisions and draft resolutions within the period allocated to it. In fact, we finished one day early. That is a good achievement. In that connection, congratulations are due to you, Mr. Chairman, to the members of your Bureau, and to all delegations, political groupings and the Secretariat for your hard work and cooperation.

Nevertheless, it is yet to be determined whether our work at this session will achieve the positive results that we all look for. That is contingent on our will, collectively and individually, to follow up and implement the decisions and resolutions adopted at this session. The issue of the implementation of decisions and resolutions has been raised by many delegations. This question should be seriously addressed by all of us, especially against the backdrop of the renewed spirit and momentum for revitalizing the General Assembly.

In conclusion, NAM reaffirms and reiterates its commitment in promoting national peace and security through disarmament measures. NAM would also like to express our strong reaffirmation of our view that multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, provide the only sustainable way to address disarmament and international security issues.

Mr. Jon Yong-Ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I asked for the floor to clarify once again the position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the nuclear issue between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States. I hope that my statement on the nuclear issue between our country and the United States will help correct the understanding of all participants present here today.

From a historical point of view, the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula originated with the United States. In other words, it is in essence a product of the United States hostile policy of stifling the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by means of nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, the United States is now misleading public opinion, as if the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were placing the nuclear non-proliferation system in danger.

We cannot overlook the fact that the United States Secretary of Energy, in his statement at the meeting held at United Nations Headquarters on 5 November 2003, in reference to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, asserted that North Korea was in non-compliance with its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and pursued a covert uranium enrichment programme. This is contrary to fact.

My delegation deems it necessary to take this opportunity briefly to summarize the nuclear issue between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States. The United States undertook the obligation to stop nuclear threats and renounce hostility towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in accordance with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea-United States joint statement of 11 June 1993 and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea-United States Agreed Framework adopted in 1994. However, the United States did not carry out any of its obligations but, instead, pursued the development of new types of nuclear weapons, further intensifying the nuclear threats against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In particular, the United States scrapped the 1994 Agreed Framework and violated the basic principles of the NPT by naming the Democratic People's Republic of Korea part of an "axis of evil" and making it a target for a pre-emptive nuclear strike and by evading its commitment with respect to construction of light-water reactors and stopping the supply of heavy fuel oil.

What on earth is international law? Who should implement it? Is the United States judgement or argument international law? Is the United States entitled to assess the implementation of international

agreements and punish the violators of its judgements? Should only small countries have the obligation to implement them? Is it not a violation of the NPT that the United States threatens to use nuclear weapons against small countries developing new types of nuclear weapons?

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea decided to withdraw from the NPT and strengthen its nuclear deterrence to cope with the ever-intensifying United States hostile policy and pressure on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Are these truly threats to other countries or a violation of international law? Is the threat of the big countries against the small countries designed for peace? Where is the resistance of the small countries against threats to peace? It is necessary for the international community to discuss sincerely and frankly the issues of peace and security and justice and impunity. If the United States completely abandons its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, respects us and treats our system equally, we can dissolve the concerns of the United States. It is for that reason that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has maintained its consistent position of settling the nuclear issue according to the principle of simultaneous actions after advancing a proposal for a package solution whose ultimate goal is to realize the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

However, it is our position to respond to a persistent United States hard-line policy of stifling the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with a tough stance, and to respond to a friendly attitude of the United States with a corresponding attitude. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue to follow closely the moves of the United States.

In conclusion, my delegation extends its deep appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, for having dedicated yourself to achieving the desired results of our deliberations.

Mr. Udedibia (Nigeria): On behalf of the African Group, I have the honour of congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, and of thanking you for bringing the work of this session to a very fruitful conclusion. Through you, I thank the Bureau, the Secretariat, the interpreters and other staff that provided other services.

Draft resolution A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1 is very important to Africa because the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons has largely been responsible for the political instability, insecurity, economic stagnation and humanitarian crisis that have befallen the continent. For that reason, the African Group deeply regrets the inability of the First Committee to adopt this draft resolution by consensus, as had always been the case with similar texts.

However, it is our hope that the area of disagreement will be resolved early enough to allow for the full implementation of the draft resolution. We also hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus when it comes up for consideration at the General Assembly.

Mr. Rowe (Sierra Leone): On behalf of the African Group, which my delegation has the honour of chairing for the month of November, I would like to commend you, Mr. Chairman, on your superb performance in directing the affairs of the First Committee. Of course, we never doubted your capacity or ability to do so satisfactorily.

Yesterday and this afternoon, some delegations used what could be described as a maritime metaphor when they said that we were approaching the harbour. Mr. Chairman, as captain, with the assistance of the Bureau and the efficient Secretariat staff including the interpreters, translators and reporters, you steered the ship and made sure that it was not converted into a battleship. Now we are safely anchored in the harbour, one day earlier than scheduled. Of course, it was not all smooth sailing, especially during the past few days and this afternoon.

However, the African Group is gratified that, in spite of the small dent on the ship, the ship at least did not sink. We still have some hope that we can repair the damage done to the principle of consensus on major international issues. And we consider the draft resolution that we have just adopted (A/C.1/58/L.1/Rev.1) to relate to a major international issue.

Allow me to express our deep appreciation to all those delegations that supported draft resolutions sponsored by the African Group and those that were — and still are — of direct interest to us, including the draft resolution we have just adopted. I spoke of African-sponsored draft resolutions, but, in reality, these were draft resolutions of the First Committee and of the General Assembly, because, notwithstanding our national and regional interests, in the final analysis, when it comes to disarmament and international peace and security, we have a collective responsibility — indeed,

a collective obligation — to work assiduously and, by our action in this Committee, to make this world safer for us all.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of Sierra Leone for the kind words he addressed to the captain and his shipmates.

Mr. Cato (Philippines): On behalf of the Asian Group, I have the honour of expressing our appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, for steering the work of the First Committee to a productive conclusion. Under your able leadership and guidance, we were able to accomplish what we set out to do. We also take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Nobuyasu Abe, the members of the Bureau and the Secretariat, the interpreters, the translators and all those who in one way or another have helped ensure the successful completion of our work in the First Committee.

Finally, we commend all delegations for the cooperative spirit in which our work in the First Committee was conducted this year. This has helped us achieve our objective of bringing us closer to a safer, more secure, weapons-free world.

The Chairman: I give the floor to the Rapporteur of the Committee.

Mr. Carbo (Ecuador), Rapporteur of the First Committee (*spoke in Spanish*): I join in the words of congratulation that have been addressed to you, Mr. Chairman, on the work done by you and the Secretariat.

I have asked for the floor to express on behalf of my delegation and of my fellow members of the Bureau our appreciation to the Secretary of the First Committee, Mr. Mohammad Sattar, who after 30 years of service to the Organization — 20 years with the First Committee and five of those as the Committee's Secretary — will soon enjoy a well-deserved retirement. Mr. Sattar has had a long and productive career characterized by his professionalism and dedication. We thank him for his invaluable service and wish him success in the next stage of his life.

The Chairman: Let me say on my own account that I wish to echo the words the Rapporteur just expressed to Mr. Sattar, who is about to retire from the United Nations Secretariat and who has served the Organization — and the international community through the United Nations — with distinction for almost 30 years. It is with regret, Mr. Sattar, that we see you leave the Organization, but you deserve your retirement, and I am sure that you will keep a close eye on the very important and very serious issues that your Committee has been dealing with for the 20 years you have been working with the First Committee. You will have no shortage of issues to follow, and I am sure that as a keen observer of current issues, you will follow them very closely. I hope you will be able to see us make progress, not only here but in other parts of the United Nations disarmament machinery. So, I wish to express my personal heartfelt thanks for your very good cooperation.

Mr. Stevceski (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): Allow me, on behalf of the members of the Eastern European Group, of which the Republic of Macedonia is the Chairman for the current month, to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and to congratulate you on your skilful leadership throughout all the stages of the work of the First Committee this year. Your tireless personal effort and dedication contributed immensely to the successful conclusion of our work. Our thanks and congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau and to the Secretariat as well.

The Chairman: There are no further requests for the floor at this stage. We have thus concluded the final phase of our work: action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under agenda items 62 to 80.

Before adjourning the meeting, let me make a brief statement in my capacity as Chairman of the First Committee.

Since its creation, the First Committee has been an integral part of a global norm-building process encompassing a wide range of issues on the international security agenda. While they lack the binding force of treaties, our resolutions can nevertheless serve to strengthen the rule of law governing the control and elimination of the world's most dangerous weapons. They can also identify the requirements for new norms, and gauge Member States readiness for them. Our work is necessarily political in nature because we seek to set priorities for collective action among Member States while providing a common forum for the expression of views by individual delegations and groups of States.

To achieve those challenging tasks, we must have procedures that are both flexible enough to accommodate the needs of all Member States and effectively structured to ensure that our efforts will yield concrete, practical results. I am happy that this year the Committee has taken some initial steps to improve its own deliberative process.

Last year, my predecessor urged all members to respond to the September 2002 report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on United Nations reform (A/57/387). Although, once again, we have not succeeded in adopting the full range of procedural and administrative reforms outlined in that important document, we have moved that process forward in a number of respects. We have set aside time for an informal exchange of views devoted to precisely this issue. Moreover, we have adopted 29 draft resolutions and decisions without a vote, including a draft resolution on improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the First Committee.

Now, it is my intention to prepare an assessment — my assessment, as Chairman — of the informal exchange of views on our working methods that we had a couple of weeks ago. In my view, it is extremely important that the essence of that very productive discussion be captured on paper. It must not be left to dissipate into thin air, as happens only too often in this Organization. I will share that assessment with the President of the General Assembly, with my successor as Chairman and, of course, with the members of this Committee.

In my view, the First Committee has a lot of untapped potential in the area of contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security. We should constantly try to improve our act. The laundry list of such action is long; let me highlight in this connection just a few examples of what, in my own personal view, could be done.

First, the general debate could be shortened to just one week. I recognize that this would not be without complications, especially for the smaller delegations. But, in my view, the benefits would outweigh the adverse effects. Most significantly, a more intensive general debate would allow for maximum participation from the capitals for its whole duration. We should turn the general debate into a true higher-level segment of our work, an annual gathering of the crème de la crème of Member States' disarmament and non-proliferation experts.

Secondly, the thematic discussion segment could be extended and transformed into a more interactive and consultations-oriented phase of our work. More specifically, informal consultations, whether on thematic subjects or on individual draft resolutions, could be used along the lines of the way they are used in other Main Committees of the General Assembly. Such informals, chaired by coordinators appointed by the Bureau and with full conference services, could help Member States move closer to a common understanding on some issues and could at least provide a venue for a more interactive debate on some others.

Thirdly, our agenda should be overhauled to better reflect the actual thematic content of our work. Even if this were to be done for presentational purposes only, a more logical and transparent presentation would certainly help the "Mr. Public" referred to by the President of the General Assembly better understand what we are actually dealing with. Put very simply, we could reduce our agenda to 10 clustered items, identical to the current thematic clusters, with the various draft resolutions now adopted under each cluster constituting the subitems on a reorganized agenda. New draft resolutions could be introduced under any of the 10 clustered items.

Fourthly, even if the Chair of the First Committee is currently elected in advance, he or she should benefit from having the rest of the Bureau also in place well before the start of the session. Moreover, early summer may still be too late for the election to take place, if we are to allow the Chair and the Bureau to have an opportunity for advance consultations with member States. I would therefore suggest that the election of the Bureaus of the Main Committees be advanced to spring, some six months before the start of the new General Assembly session. This, as some other issues, will have to be decided within the confines of the General Assembly as whole, in plenary meeting.

Let me emphasize that this is only part of a longer laundry list of possible action to be taken. As I have said, some of the suggestions that I have made can be accomplished by the First Committee alone, but some others will definitely need to be acted upon by the General Assembly as a whole.

Let me emphasize once again that we are not pursuing reform for reform's sake but in order to enhance the impact and credibility of the work of this Committee. The true purpose of efforts such as reducing the number of draft resolutions, combining them or giving them a multi-annual format is not to be found in diminishing the substantive importance of any draft resolution. On the contrary, such reforms should enable us to focus our energies and attention on more concrete results. Because an improved process can also open the way for improvements in the substance of our work, I

am optimistic about future reforms — and I believe that we have made some steps in the right direction. Other progress — both procedural and substantive — may soon follow as a result of our deliberations.

I note in this respect that the Committee agreed to create two expert groups: on the security of global information and telecommunications systems and on the subject of missiles in all its aspects. In addition, the Committee adopted a draft resolution on establishing an open-ended working group to negotiate an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons.

Yet, like almost everybody else who follows the developments in this Committee, I too am troubled by the persistence of deep divisions amongst us on some very important issues on the global agenda for international peace and security. Once again, several draft resolutions have been adopted in the face of not insignificant opposition, in many cases involving the negative or abstaining votes of a very large number of States. Such divisions, however, do not constitute evidence of any failure of our process. Instead they symbolize the work that remains ahead in deepening cooperation and expanding the common ground on which we all stand. In the words of an old Finnish proverb, "A new day shows a new way".

I would like to conclude my statement by making some final remarks. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all members of the Committee for the cooperation extended to me throughout this session. I was particularly impressed by the spirit of compromise and flexibility demonstrated by all delegations during the various phases of the Committee's work. It was certainly a great honour for me to work with you all. I also thank all delegations for their full cooperation and support in utilizing the time and facilities allocated to the First Committee in an efficient way.

Moreover, out of a total of 46 draft resolutions and seven draft decisions, the Committee succeeded in adopting 29 by consensus. This outcome is clear proof that all delegations were highly productive in conducting bilateral and multilateral consultations throughout the entire session of the Committee.

Before concluding my remarks, I would also like to express my deepest appreciation to my fellow Bureau members: the three Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Anouar Ben Youssef of Tunisia, Mr. Suriya Chindawongse of Thailand and Mr. Ionut Suseanu of Romania; and our Rapporteur, Ambassador Miguel Carbo of Ecuador. Their wisdom, expertise and very good advice were instrumental in allowing me to effectively discharge my functions as Chairman of this important body. They have indeed always stood firmly behind me throughout this entire exercise.

Allow me, on behalf of the Committee, to offer my profound gratitude to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Nobuyasu Abe, for the support he and his staff have provided from the Department for Disarmament Affairs. On behalf of the Committee, I would again like to convey my special thanks to the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Mohammad Sattar, and all of his colleagues for all their tireless efforts in enabling the Committee to proceed smoothly with its work.

My sincere appreciation also goes to all the interpreters, translators, record keepers, press officers, documents officers, conference officers and sound engineers who have diligently worked behind the scenes in order to bring the work of this Committee to a successful conclusion.

Finally, I want to thank the civil society representatives who, this year as in the past, followed our session and who are truly an indispensable part of the First Committee community. They helped to communicate the results of our deliberations to a wider public, and I want to add that I personally appreciated their counsel throughout our work and look forward to their constructive contributions in the future.

The First Committee will reconvene next year, sometime in early summer, to elect its Chairman for the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

The First Committee has thus concluded its work for the main part of the fifty-eighth session.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.